SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL
for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

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Action of the Centennial Conference on the Oxford League.

A COMMITTEE was raised by the Conference, on the Oxford League, consisting of Dr. J. H. Vincent, (chairman,) Dr. M. C. Briggs, Lieutenant-Governor G. D. Shands, Rev. H. A. Monroe, Judge J. W. F. White, Rev. Dr. C. B. Galloway, Rev. C. S. Smith, Rev. J. H. Anderson, and Rev. F. M. Hamilton.

This committee's report was adopted, as follows, with a slight amendment as noted below:

The Oxford League has for its objects:

I. The commemoration of the meetings of certain students at Oxford, England, between 1729 and 1737, principally under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley, from which meetings were developed the great religious awakenings and revivals of the last century by which the doctrines and spirit of the apostolic Church were again given in their fullness to the world, and the power of the primitive Church once more established.

II. The furtherance of the fourfold objects of the original Oxford Club:

1. The more careful and devout study of the Holy Scriptures.

2. The cultivation of a nobler and purer personal Christian character.

3. The study of the ancient* classics for literary culture.

4. The devising of methods for doing good to others.

The Oxford League will, in the fuller development of this scheme, encourage Methodist youth,

1.) To study the Holy Scriptures with a view to the promotion of personal piety.

2.) To become familiar with the biblical origin of the doctrines, spirit, and methods which characterize their own Church.

3.) To trace the presence and development of the Methodistic force in the Holy Catholic Church from the days of the apostles to the present time.

4.) To trace the origin of the modern evangelical and apostolic revival, known as Methodism—"Christianity in earnest"—in the rectory of Epworth, the halls of Oxford, and in the consecrated homes of the best English society; and to promote a just appreciation of the strength, scholarship, and dignity of the Methodistic movement.

5.) To promote personal consecration to practical work, carrying the Gospel in personal service to the most needy, and to the most degraded, to the godless poor and to the godless rich, reading to the bedridden and the blind, visiting the sick-room, the hospital, and the prison, looking after new families coming into the community, and inviting children and adults to the Sunday-school and the public service, studying the various benevolences of the Church, and thus cultivating intelligent enthusiasm in the entire work of the Church.

6.) To promote intellectual training under the auspices of the Church among those who no longer attend school, and thus to develop a rational and refined Christian social life in which accomplished people may find inspiration, and people of limited opportunities be brought into gentle, ennobling, and sanctifying fellowships.

7.) To further these various ends by the publication and circulation of permanent documents devoted to the history, philosophy, doctrines, institutions, and achievements of Methodism.

1. The Oxford League may be adopted by the several branches of Methodism, each Church providing general plans and literature, through its own publishing houses and under its own authority.

2. The Oxford League may be organized in any individual church.

3. The pastor should be, *ex officio*, president, with an assistant who shall be nominated by the pastor, approved by the League, and called "Leader of the League."

* The conference directed this word *ancient* to be changed to *Christian*. It is historically true, nevertheless, that the original Oxford Club did study the ancient classics.

4. There may be three classes of members:

1.) Voluntary Readers, who need not belong to the Church, but who promise to do the required reading of the Initial Grade. These readers may attend the regular meetings of the League, but shall have no voice in its control.

2.) Registered Members, who shall be members or probationers of the Church, and who promise to do the required reading of the Initial Grade, and to attend the four regular meetings of the League each year. These members shall have a vote in the approval of the leader.

3.) Active Members, who, being full members of the Church, pledge themselves to do the required reading of the Initial and Second Grades, and to attend at least four regular and four special meetings of the League each year. All the business of the Local League shall be in the hands of the active members.

5. Each branch of the great Methodist family, adopting the Oxford League, may appoint such courses of reading as the authorities of such Churches may approve, in Church history, general and denominational; in religious literature, biblical, devotional, and biographical; in benevolent work, missionary, temperance, etc.; in general literature, science, and art; and shall adopt such regulations concerning terms of membership, local control, reports, etc., as they may deem best.

The Oxford League.

The Oxford League aims, primarily, to instruct the youth of Methodism in the early history of their Church, and in its relations to the apostolic Church. In doing this worthy work it will require the reading and study of denominational literature, and the discussion in lectures, conversations, and, whenever practicable, in class recitations and reviews, of denominational topics, embracing questions of origin, doctrine, and usage.

The introduction of the Oxford League into a particular Church will not require much time, nor subject its members to much expense. The holding of four meetings a year, and the reading of a few strictly denominational tracts, will meet the first and essential demands of the movement.

The wider and more comprehensive aims of the League, in substantial imitation of the original Oxford Club, will require more time, a more detailed organization, and the adjustment of relations between the League and the "Associations," "Unions," etc., already existing in the local Church. There need be no interference with the work of such societies by the League. Its work as already attempted by them may be duly recognized. Their organization and plans may be incorporated in the League, and their officers accepted as officers of the League. Where incorporation is deemed undesirable, plans of complete co-operation may be adopted. The assignment of special lines of service to societies already established will render the duties of the League simple and practicable.

The fourfold objects of the Club at Oxford may be compassed through the League and co-ordinate institutions:

1. The more devout study of the Holy Scriptures may be promoted through the Assembly, the Sunday-school, the Bible class, and special Scripture reading classes conducted under the auspices of the League.

2. The promotion of personal piety may be secured through the Church prayer-meeting, the class-meeting, and through committees and conferences of the League designed to increase personal interest and faith in a more intelligently earnest religious life, and in the institutions of the Church designed to advance it.

3. The awakening and direction of the intellectual and literary activities of the Church, as a means of neutralizing temptation to indolence and frivolity, of increasing personal power for good, and of creating a true social ideal and a useful social life, may be advanced by the League through the Quarterly Conference Committee on Education, through the Church Lyceum, through "Chautauqua Literary and Scientific" local circles, through the "Spare-Minute" classes, and in whatsoever other way the officers of the League may deem wise and practical.

4. The development of practical benevolence, and of a true social life, may be furthered by the League through the appointed committees of the Quarterly Conference, through social and other unions already established, and through committees on visitation, on social entertainment, on evangelistic service, etc.

The following suggestions may aid pastors and others in making an experiment in the Methodist Episcopal Church with this scheme, so heartily recommended by the Centennial Conference in Baltimore, in December, 1884:

1. The Oxford League may be organized in any individual Church.

2. The pastor should be *ex-officio* president, with an assistant who shall be nominated by the pastor, approved by the League, and called "Leader of the League."

3. There shall be three classes of members: *Active Members*, *Registered Members*, and *Voluntary Readers*:

1.) *Active* Members are those who, being full members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, pledge themselves to do the required reading of the Initial and Second Grades and to attend at least four regular and four special meetings of the League each year.

2.) *Registered* Members are those who, being full members or probationers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, pledge themselves to do the required reading of the Initial Grade and to attend the four regular meetings of the League each year.

3.) *Voluntary Readers* are those who, even though

neither members nor probationers of the Church, promise to do the required reading of the Initial Grade. These readers may attend the four regular meetings of the League each year, but shall have no voice in its control.

4. There shall be held each year four *Regular* and four *Special* Meetings, with such *Additional* Meetings as may be agreed upon by the Active Members: *a.*) A *Regular* Meeting shall be held each quarter before, and, where practicable, within eight days of, the public administration of the Lord's Supper in the Church with which the League is connected, and a service preparatory to the Communion shall be held, designed to place greater emphasis upon this divine Sacrament, to exalt the doctrines which it represents, and to increase the reverence, devotion, and spiritual strength and comfort of youthful believers. *b.*) A *Special* Meeting shall be held each quarter, designed to increase the efficiency of the Church Committees, Associations, Unions, Societies, or other organizations of the League, or co-operating with it; to review the required readings; to promote by lectures, essays, or discussions a better knowledge and a higher appreciation of some phase of Church history, doctrine, usage, or activity; and to emphasize and illustrate the necessity of personal, prayerful Scripture reading and study in order to intelligent, fervent, effective religious character and influence. *c.*) *Additional* Meetings may be held by appointment of the League to advance the various objects—spiritual, ecclesiastical, social, and literary—for the furtherance of which the League was organized. *d.*) There may be held in the local Church, for the promotion of the various ends contemplated by the League, a meeting, which may be known as "The Visitation," at which, by sermons, lectures, services of sacred song, conferences, Bible studies, etc., conducted by experienced instructors from at home and abroad, the young people especially may be trained in religious experience and inspired to Church activity in the various lines of Christian service.

5. The *Initial Grade* of Reading shall embrace:

1.) The following chapters from the Gospel according to Matthew: ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, xxv, xxvi, xxvii, xxviii; and from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles: i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix.

2.) "Our Own Church" Series, Nos. i–ix.

3.) "Outlines of Methodism." By James M'Gee.

4.) The "Oxford League Series," Nos. i–vii.

6. The *Second Grade* of Reading shall embrace:

1.) The following chapters from the New Testament: John i, xiv, xv, xvi, xxi; Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians.

2.) "Heroic Methodists." By Dr. Daniel Wise.

3.) "Pioneers of American Methodism." By Dr. C. J. Little.

4.) The following tracts:

Prominent Doctrines and Peculiar Usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Hawley. Revised Series, No. 82. 44 pages.

The Apostolical Succession. By Rev. G. A. Jacob, D.D., of the Church of England. New Series, No. 173. 20 pages.

Wesley's Relations to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. R. M. Hatfield. New Series, No. 38. 36 pages.

The Protestant Religion no Novelty. Revised Series, No. 70. 8 pages.

Rome and the Popes. By Mrs. Mary Stevens Robinson. New Series, No. 156. 16 pages.

Can I Play Cards? By A. B. G. New Series, No. 137. 24 pages.

The Higher Path. New Series, No. 17. 12 pages.

Sacred Song Series. Nos. 1–8. (4 pages each.)

The Young Disciple at the Lord's Table. 27 pp.

Loving Counsels to a Methodist Youth. 27 pp.

Wesley and Early Methodism. By Mrs. Angela K. Davis. 142 pages.

7. Additional grades and courses of reading may be recognized and adopted—in *Church History*, general and denominational; *Religious Literature*, biblical, biographical, and devotional; *Benevolent Work*, and in *General Literature*, *Science*, *and Art*. These recognized courses may be such as those of "The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle," "The Spare-Minute Home College," "The Lyceum," "The Young Christians'" List, "Readings for Probationers," and such additional courses as the specific objects of the Oxford League may in the future require.

8. All fees necessary to the management of the local League may be agreed upon at any regular meeting.

9. A "Board of Control," consisting of five members, may be annually appointed by the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

10. Five or more active members of any local Oxford League, who have completed the required readings of the Initial and Second Grades, and who have received from the pastor and leader of the League a certificate to that effect, may on application, indorsed by the pastor, to the "Central Board of Control" at New York, receive a charter for a "Chapter of the Oxford League," under which charter a more compact organization may be effected, and the ends of the League be more successfully carried out.

THE tardy pupil becomes a tardy man or woman, whose word cannot be depended upon.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

A. D. 58.] **LESSON IX. PAUL SENT TO FELIX.** [March 1.

Acts 23. 12-24. [*Commit to memory verses* 20–22.]

12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, *See thou* tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me.

23 And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Ces'a-re'a, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

24 And provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Fe'lix the governor.

General Statement.

We see another link in the chain of events which took Paul out of the power of his most intense enemies, and placed him under the guardianship of the Roman eagles. That the great apostle was permitted to live for ten years, to obtain the rest which his overworked frame and tense nerves required, to write those later epistles which are the precious heritage of the Church, and perhaps to carry his Gospel into new lands of Western Europe: all these great results were hinged upon the transactions of a single night, and upon the forethought and courage of a single boy. On that night, while Paul in his prison was enjoying the fellowship of his Saviour, the Jews were plotting against his life. A band of conspirators took upon themselves a solemn oath to slay him before they should again taste food, and the rulers were linked with them in the projected murder. But there were too many implicated for the scheme to remain a secret. It was whispered through the streets of Jerusalem, and came to the ears of a youth who was related to the apostle. He went boldly to the castle of Antonia, and requested to see the prisoner. A boyish figure walks with some hesitation through the files of soldiers, and knocks at the apostle's cell. His tale is told, and he is then led to the commandant, who takes the young informant kindly by the hand, and listens to his story. That night an army of nearly five hundred men, horse and foot, gathers at the castle gate. Paul is brought down, securely guarded against sudden attack. There is a clatter of hoofs on the pavement of Jerusalem, the gates are passed, the open country is reached, and the prisoner is safe from the conspirators. Two days after he is brought to Cesarea. The door of a prison again closes upon him, not to open for two long years.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 12. When it was day. The day after Paul's appearance before the council, narrated in the last lesson. **Certain of the Jews.** These were of the class known as *zealots*, who believed it to be right to murder those who apostatized from the Jewish faith. Some of this class were sincere though bigoted, but others cloaked their personal hate under a religious pretense. (1) *How easy it is to make our prejudices matters of conscience!* **Bound themselves.** Literally, "took an anathema upon themselves." This was a Hebrew term expressive either of that which was consecrated to God's service or devoted to destruction in his cause. They solemnly pledged themselves that Paul should be *anathema*, that is, devoted as a victim. **Neither eat nor drink.** This was to hasten the deed of murder. **Killed Paul.** Here was a body of so-called religious men who had taken a religious vow to murder a fellow-man without trial. (2) *Notice how conscience can be perverted to evil.*

13, 14. More than forty men. The number showed the bitterness of Jewish hate, but also led to the discovery of the plot, which could not long be kept a secret among so many. **Came to the chief-priests.** Then the rulers themselves, men whose office bound them to see that justice was done, were implicated in this wicked plot. Luke's story is true to the life of that period, as any reader of Josephus will remember. **We have bound ourselves.** Literally, "we have anathematized ourselves with an anathema," the very strongest expression possible. **Will eat nothing.** They failed to keep one part of their vow; did they fulfill the other, and starve to death? It is too much to hope, since the Talmud tells us that the rabbis could absolve men from inconvenient vows. **Slain Paul.** Such assassinations were justified by the leading Jewish teachers, as Josephus and Philo; they have been attempted by professed Christians, as in the Gunpowder Plot, and the murder of Henry IV. of France; even Protestant history has shown instances of them; and the Danites in Utah and the Thugs in India are their illustrations in the present generation.

15. Signify. A legal term: "give official notice." Thus the whole council would be made accessory to the crime. **Bring him down.** From the castle of Antonia, where Paul was confined, to the meeting-place in the temple. **Inquire something.** Rev. Ver., "as though ye would judge of his case more exactly." An excuse could be given that the inquiry of the day before had been interrupted. **And we.** This word is emphatic, "*we* will see to it!" **Or ever.** Rather, "before he come near." 3) *The purest and best man of his time is sometimes the most bitterly hated.*

16. Paul's sister's son. The only reference in the Bible to Paul's family. He was a youth, but whether his mother was living in Jerusalem or he had come thither for his education is unknown. **Heard.** Perhaps through the boastings of the conspirators, or through some member of the council friendly to Paul. **Entered into the castle.** The tower of Antonia, north of the temple, where the garrison was stationed to guard the city, and where Paul was confined. **Told Paul.** The apostle, as a Roman citizen, was allowed considerable liberty in the castle, and permitted to see his friends. (4) *Notice how a boy became an important link in the chain of church history and the world's evangelization.*

17. One of the centurions. A centurion was a captain commanding a company of one hundred men in the Roman army. **Bring this young man.** He knew that his life was secure, for his Lord had promised that

he should see Rome; yet he took every possible measure to provide for his safety. (5) *Trust in God should impel us not to idleness, but to action.* **He hath a certain thing.** He showed caution in keeping the matter secret, even from the centurion.

18. So he took him. We notice here that this prisoner somehow impressed himself upon all around him, centurions, captains, rulers, by the force of his personal character. Almost every chapter in the latter half of the Acts contains an illustration of Paul's influence over men. (6) *True nobility of character will shine out even from a prison cell.* **Paul the prisoner.** Literally, "the one bound;" a name used here for the first time, but one that in the after years the apostle was not ashamed to own, as a badge of honor. **Prayed me.** Rev. Ver., 'asked me." The word "pray" formerly referred to requests of men, as well as petitions to God.

19, 20. Took him by the hand. Showing a kindness of manner which invited the youth's confidence. **The Jews.** Here meaning their rulers, though most of the people shared in their sentiments. **Have agreed to desire.** Thus the plot was formed between the rulers and the assassins, and awaited only the unconscious help of the chief captain.

21, 22. Do not thou. He spoke as Paul's friend, and was no doubt in sympathy with him. **Looking for a promise.** A promise to bring Paul down to the council. **The chief captain.** He found himself in a difficult situation. On the one side were all the Jews, with their characteristic bigotry, unscrupulousness, and murderous hate. On the other side was a single Jew, who, fortunately for his life at that moment, was also a Roman citizen, and entitled to the pretection of Roman law. **Tell no man.** Thus the cause of Paul's sudden departure was left in mystery, and his would-be murderers found themselves unaccountably foiled. (7) *Notice how God overrules the plans of men for the interest of his cause.*

23. Make ready. In all four hundred and seventy men, certainly an ample guard. But the chief captain did not know how widely the conspiracy might have extended, nor what danger there might be of a riotous outbreak. Less than two years afterward Cesarea was for days in the power of a mob, and less than ten years later the streets of Jerusalem were crimson with the blood of contending factions. So Lysias may have been wise in his precautions. **Spearmen two hundred.** Literally, "men holding a weapon in the right hand," whether it were a javelin or a sling. **Third hour of the night.** Three hours after sunset, or about nine o'clock, so that they might anticipate the conspiracy by a night journey.

24. Provide them beasts. Probably all were mounted in order to journey swiftly. It was a journey of about seventy miles from Jerusalem to Cesarea. This place was the Roman capital of Palestine, and the residence of the procurator. Its inhabitants were mostly heathen, though there were many Jews, and a Christian Church established by Philip the evangelist. Only ten days before, Paul had left Cesarea to go up to Jerusalem. **Bring him safe.** They journeyed the first night as far as Antipatris, about forty miles. Here the spearmen and soldiers left the party, as their services were no longer needed, and the seventy horsemen alone escorted Paul the rest of the way to Cesarea. **To Felix.** This man had been a slave, but had been freed by the Emperor Claudius, and made ruler over the Roman part of Palestine, embracing Galilee, Samaria, Judea, and Perea, the district east of the Sea of Galilee being governed by "King Agrippa." According to Tacitus, Felix "wielded the power of a king with the character of a slave," and disgraced his rule by cruelty and lust. He was recalled A. D. 60 by the Emperor Nero. **The governor.** His Roman title was *procurator*, and he was subordinate to the proconsul Quadratus, who ruled as the emperor's representative over all Syria, having his capital at Antioch.

HOME READINGS.

M. Paul sent to Felix. Acts 23. 12–24.
Tu. Paul's retinue. Acts 23. 25–35.
W. Absalom's conspiracy. 2 Sam. 15. 7–18.
Th. Counsel against Christ. John 11. 47–57.
F. A friend in need. 1 Sam. 21. 1–10.
S. Rejoicing in tribulation. 1 Pet. 4. 12–19.
S. Glorying in tribulation. Rom. 5. 1–11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed. 1 Pet. 4. 16.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 595.

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause;
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross.

Jesus, my God! I know his name;
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands,
Till the decisive hour.

TIME.—In the spring of A. D. 58, immediately following the last lesson.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Cesarea.

RULERS.—See Lesson IV.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's unconscious instruments.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A Cruel Conspiracy, v. 12–22.
What did certain of the Jews do?
What was the purpose of the conspiracy?
Of how many did the company consist?
To whom did they reveal their intention?
How did they propose to secure Paul?
Who discovered the plot?
To whom did he reveal it?
What course was taken by Paul?
To whom did the centurion take Paul's nephew?
What charge did the chief captain give?

2. A Night Journey, v. 23, 24.
What course did the chief captain adopt?
Why did he send so many soldiers?
To what place and to whom were they sent?
When did they start on the journey?

Practical Teachings.

Where does this lesson teach—

1. The cruelty of religious bigotry?
2. The probable exposure of sin?
3. The power of God to confound his enemies?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Cruel Conspiracy, v. 12–22.
Who conspired against Paul?
What oath did they take?
How many were in the conspiracy?
To whom did they tell the plot?
What aid did they ask?
How did Paul learn of the plot?
What request did he make?
What did the officer do?
Who gave the lad a hearing?
What plea were the Jews to make?
What false reasons were they to offer?
What was their real purpose?
What counsel did the lad receive?

2. A Night Journey, v. 23, 24.
Whom did the chief captain summon?
On what journey were they sent?
What guard were they to take?
Who was put in their charge?
To whom was Paul to be delivered?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where, in this lesson, are we shown—

1. That enmity to Christ makes men cruel?
2. That God provides for and protects his servants?
3. That great good may be done by the humblest?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What did forty of the Jews do? **Formed themselves into a band.**
What did they swear? **Not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul.**

What did they plan to have the chief captain do? **Bring Paul before the council again.**
What did they pretend this was for? **To try his case more fully.**
What was the true reason? **They wanted a chance to kill him.**
Who heard of this plot? **Paul's nephew.**
What did he do? **Went and told Paul.**
Where did Paul send him? **To tell the chief captain.**
What did the captain say to the young man? **"Do not let any one know that you have told me this."**
What did he then do? **Called two officers.**
What command did he give them? **Get ready two hundred soldiers and seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen.**
What for? **To carry Paul to Felix, the Roman governor.**
Where did Felix live? **In Cesarea.**
What time did they start? **About nine o'clock in the evening.** [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Words with Little People.

Do you remember the "Beatitude," which says: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake?" Paul meant very nearly the same thing in the GOLDEN TEXT. Remember there is no "blessed" when you suffer for doing wrong; then you are to be "ashamed."

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did certain of the Jews do? **"Banded themselves together to kill Paul."**
2. Under what vow did they bind themselves to do this? **Neither to eat nor to drink.**
3. How many were there in this conspiracy? **More than forty.**
4. Who informed Paul of their plot? **His sister's son.**
5. When the chief captain became aware of this plot, what did he do? **He sent Paul to Felix.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Unconscious Allies of the Gospel.

I. ENEMIES AS ALLIES.
Banded together under a curse. v. 12.
"Ye thought evil....God meant....good." Gen. 50. 20.
"The wrath of man shall praise thee." Psa. 76. 10.
"That same Jesus....Lord and Christ." Acts 2. 36.

II. YOUNG PEOPLE AS ALLIES.
Paul's sister's son. v. 16.
"The child Samuel ministered." 1 Sam. 3. 1.
"David....smote the Philistine." 1 Sam. 17. 49.
"The maid....of the land of Israel." 2 Kings 5. 2-4.
"A lad here....barley loaves." John 6. 9.

III. EARTHLY POWERS AS ALLIES.
Called unto him....two centurions. v. 23.
"Powers that be....ordained of God." Rom. 13. 1.
"Kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60. 3.
"Feared....heard....were Romans." Acts 16. 38.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Paul's Escape.

1. We learn how bitter may be the hate which has its ground in religious feeling. v. 12-15. These people were worshipers of God, but they were ready to murder another worshiper of the same God whose views were different from their own.

2. We learn how much good a boy may do who dares to do right. v. 16-22. This youth exposed himself to danger, but he thereby saved a good man's life, and helped the cause of Christ.

3. We learn the importance of promptness in action. The boy, the apostle, and the chief captain all thought at once of what was the best thing to do, and did it promptly.

4. We learn that some heathens are better than some professed worshipers of God. v. 19-24. While the religious Jews were murderous, the chief captain, ignorant of God, was just and courteous.

5. We learn that all the schemes of men are as nothing to break one of God's promises. The Jews could not kill the one whom God had promised to preserve.

English Teacher's Notes.

I REMEMBER once watching some little boys learning the "sword exercise." It was a pretty sight to see the younger of the two lift his mock sword and aim a tremendous blow at his brother while the latter just raised his hand and neatly turned off the descending weapon. This "parrying" pleased both parties greatly, and made quite an amusing game for them. How different would it have been had the blow been aimed in malice, and had the party assailed been in peril of his life!

Our subject for to-day is the parrying of a blow. We see a sharp deadly weapon aimed at an innocent man. We see the blow parried, and those who would have dealt it utterly foiled. Taken as a mere narrative the story is an exciting one. Look at

The weapon aimed. I once had a vivid description given me of the manufacture of weapons at Chatham, and of the huge furnaces and mighty machinery at work there. One picture was especially terrible. I heard how two enormous doors opened in the side of a wall, disclosing a furnace at white heat. From either side emerged two monster arms which seized a bar of iron, and immersed it in the glowing flames, to make out of it a deadly thing which should destroy human life. But the picture given us to-day by Luke is far more terrible—more than forty men, gathered together in the early morning hours to mature together the dark thoughts that had been with them in the night. Their purpose is fierce enough—it is murder. But to make it more terrible it is taken up by wild fanaticism, and immersed in the white heat of an awful curse. They dare to call down on themselves the wrath of heaven if they take food or drink till their purpose is carried out.

There is the weapon—horrible to behold. But how is it to reach its object? How shall the blow be aimed? The chief priests can help in this: they can obtain from the Roman authorities that Paul shall be brought once more before the council. Then the blow can be struck.

Do not these men appear monsters of wickedness? Yet they were once boys—children, learning the Scriptures like those in our classes. Perhaps they began by planning to torment a companion, or to destroy the comfort of a neighbor, as boys and girls sometimes do now.

The weapon is aimed and ready to descend. How can the victim escape? We see next

The blow parried. Can Paul himself parry the stroke? No, for he is a prisoner in chains. What had stood between him and the wrath of the Jews before? The Roman power. Chap. 21. 31–33; 23. 10. But that power will be useless now, for the chief captain is ignorant of the intention of the conspirators, and he can hardly refuse to bring Paul once more before the council for examination. The matter, however, has come to the ear of Paul's young nephew—can he parry the blow? He has no power any way, no influence with either Jewish or Roman authorities. But he does what he can; he comes and tells his uncle. And what can Paul do? Nothing more than introduce his nephew to the men in whose hands he is a prisoner. But the young man's story is listened to, and the chief captain determines to save Paul. But how? He cannot refuse a reasonable request from the council: even the Roman soldiers can hardly protect the prisoner from the preconcerted attack of over forty determined fanatics. So the letter is written to Felix the governor and the order is given which conveys Paul far out of the reach of the conspirators. But what if the Jews discover the matter and attempt to seize Paul on the eve of departure? A strong force is ordered to escort him, heavy-armed and light-armed men half the way, and cavalry the whole of the journey. Every need is provided for. By the time that the murderers are ready for their victim, he is in safe keeping miles away. The blow has been effectually parried.

But who parried it? Not Paul, nor his nephew, nor Lysias, nor the soldiers, but He who used them all in the matter. A quick eye and a ready and vigorous hand are needed to parry a sudden and powerful blow. The eye of him who never slumbers nor sleeps watched over his servant, and the arm of Omnipotence was ready for his defense. The Lord parried the blow.

We can hardly imagine the feelings of the defeated conspirators next morning. The priests would probably release them from their vow, much in the same way as the Romish Church now grants dispensations to her votaries. But they must have been puzzled to account for the failure of the plan they had prepared so carefully. It may not have occurred to them that Christ had seen it—seen the weapon forged and the blow aimed.

But there was one who understood this. The order to Paul to start on his night journey would be no perplexity to him. He knew that Christ not only saw all, but acted for him.

Christ sees every weapon forged by one person against another, no matter whether it be great or small; hears each unkind whisper; notices every little annoying trick; knows every malicious plan.

Christ not only sees but acts for those who trust in him. No weapon can do them any real harm. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." Isa. 54. 17. His eye and his arm insure their safety.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin with *two night pictures*—Paul in the castle with his Saviour by his side; the Jews in the temple taking their wicked oath....Give the facts under these heads: 1.) The conspirators; 2.) The youth; 3.) The chief captain; 4.) The escape....Notice throughout the contrast of character: God's enemies—angry, cruel, without conscience; God's servant—calm, self-possessed, equal to emergencies ...What caused the difference between them?....Notice especially how a youth, one who was not much older than a boy, aided in saving a life, and the good that resulted from it....Some lessons from this story are given in "Thoughts for Young People." ....Some illustrations of the fact that God's cause has its unconscious helpers are given in the Analytical and Biblical Outline....ILLUSTRATION. When the mines were dug under the East River, at Hell Gate, north of New York city, in order to deepen the channel, and the time came to explode them, the officer in command took his three-year-old child upon his knee, and caused her to bring together the two wires which caused the explosion of tons of ammunition, and the opening of the channel. A little child was able to be the link in a great chain; so a youth was an important link in the chain of Paul's life, and its mighty results.

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 14: Chief priests and elders, 717. Ver. 15: The council, 718. Ver. 23; The third hour, 806.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Lord our Protector.* Print in large letters, "Danger, Deliverance." Ask who the story in our lesson is about, and bring out the thought that Paul was one of God's children; that he was in danger and found deliverance, and the story was written in God's Book for us so that when we are in danger we may know where to look for deliverance.

PAUL IN DANGER.

Review briefly, letting children tell all they can about the tumult, the castle to which Paul was taken, etc. Picture Paul in prison, sleeping sweetly, and the Lord standing by him to comfort and cheer him. What did the Lord say to Paul while he slept? Contrast with another scene. Forty wicked men planning in the dark night hours how they might kill Paul. A vivid picture may be drawn of the scowling faces, the fierce threats, the angry gestures, and in contrast Paul in chains, sleeping sweetly with sunlight in his heart and on his face, stands out a shining proof of the beauty of goodness. Tell the plan these men made, and how certain the success of the plan seemed. Then tell the story of Elisha's danger and deliverance as told in 2 Kings, chap. 6.

PAUL'S DELIVERANCE.

Tell how Paul was delivered in simple language, something in this way: "The next morning a young man came to the castle. There were soldiers all about on guard. He went up the stairs. At the top of the stairs stood a soldier. The young man said, 'May I see Paul?' The soldier said, 'Yes.' Then he went in. This young man was Paul's sister's son. We do not know his name, but he loved Paul, and we think he was a Christian. He said, 'Uncle, I have something to tell you. Forty Jews have made a solemn promise that they will kill you. They are going to ask to have you taken again before the council, and when you are on the way they will

spring out and kill you.'" Tell the rest of the story in like simple style. It will require study, but the children will be intensely interested.

OUR DANGER AND DELIVERANCE.

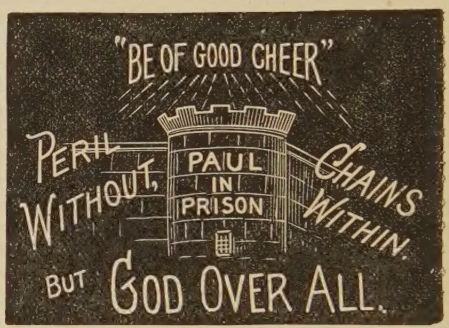
How many enemies had Paul? We, too, have many enemies. The same evil spirit who set Paul's enemies at work inspires ours. Paul had a good friend in the captain. We have a stronger Captain—Jesus. One who loved Paul was sent to warn him of danger. Parents, friends, teachers, are sent to warn us. Enemies use swords. The Lord offers a shield. Jesus is our shield, our hiding-place.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Why are these angry faces, and this clamor of wrathful voices, and who are these men lifting their hands and swearing solemn oaths? Hark! Before God they call heavy curses down upon their heads if the blood of a fellow-being be not found on their hands! And until the blood of Paul is on the hand, neither food nor drink shall be in the mouth! And now they have separated. In an excitable troop they rush to chief priests and elders. They repeat their horrid oath. Will the chief priests and elders make a net to trip up the victim on the morrow? Men hungry for their dinner will quickly shake the net and slaughter the prey. To-morrow, it is arranged that the net shall be spread. The apostle is to be brought before the holy Sanhedrin, and then what a pious deed will be quickly wrought? What feasting after it! Has God forgotten his imprisoned child? Will no bird fly with the story of this bloody plot, no wind whisper it? There is a young man hurrying to the castle-gate. He looks not behind him in his haste. He is allowed to pass the sentinels. He seeks the prisoner, and Paul's nephew spreads before him the assassin's purpose. Where is the chief captain? Let the story be told to him. They are together, the officer leading the young man to yonder dusky, secluded corner, and then he bends down to catch this horrible plot told in suppressed tones. The officer, as he listens, starts, frowns, compresses his lips. "Tell no man," he is saying to the young messenger. But what is that order to the centurions—horsemen that will go clattering through the silent streets at night, heavy-armed soldiers with weapons clanking, spearmen pressing forward with firm tramp, and in the midst of this band a prisoner securely riding? Do the more than forty conspirators know of this? What hungry men there will be on the morrow, and mad as well as hungry!

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



BLACKBOARD QUESTIONS. Where was Paul? [Point to center of the board.] What were within? *Chains.* What was without? *Peril.* What was that peril? [Some one scholar or teacher answer.] School all read the sentence at the top. "*Be of good cheer.*" Who was it said that to Paul the night previous? *The Lord stood by Paul.* Read the sentence at the bottom of the board, and speak of the unconscious instruments of God—the mob, the oath-bound band, the young man, and the chief captain, all pointing toward the road to Rome, where the Lord had said Paul should testify of him.

PAUL'S PERIL.

1 WAS FOR HIM.	**WHO?**
40 WERE AGAINST HIM.	**WHY?**
470 SOLDIERS WITH HIM.	**WHERE?**
WHICH WAS GREATEST?	

A. D. 58.] **LESSON X. PAUL BEFORE FELIX.** **[March 8.**

Acts 24. 10-27. [*Commit to memory verses* 14-16.]

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Je-ru'sa-lem for to worship.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and *toward* men.

17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from A'si-a found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me.

20 Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council.

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

22 And when Fe'lix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Ly'si-as the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

24 And after certain days when Fe'lix came with his wife Dru-sil'la, which was a Jew'ess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Fe'lix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

26 He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

27 But after two years Por'ci-us Fes'tus came into Fe'lix's room: and Fe'lix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

General Statement.

For the first time, Paul stands in chains before a Roman tribunal, accused by his own people. The trial is held in the judgment hall at Cesarea, and upon the bench sits as judge the careless, unjust, and sensual Felix, a slave lifted to a throne. Paul's accusers are heard, but their charges are scattered to the winds by his manly, dignified defense. He asserts, what no witnesses can disprove, his orderly, law-abiding conduct, yet boldly owns himself to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, through whom he looks for the resurrection from the dead. The judge sees plainly that the prisoner is innocent, but with desire to win popularity from the Jews, remands him to the prison until other witnesses can be summoned. Here the great apostle languishes for two years, cheered by the companionship of tried friends, and by the visits of the Cesarean Church. One scene of that time stands pictured by Luke's pen. It is that in which Paul the prisoner stands in one of the chambers of the palace to give an account of the Gospel to Felix and his guilty companion, Drusilla. He does not rebuke; he reasons; setting before his hearers, not their crimes, but the standard of God's law, by which they might as in a glass behold themselves guilty. To an ungodly man he discoursed of righteousness; to a pair swallowed up in lust, he showed self-control; to worldlings he presented the judgment to come, until the ruler grew pale under his prisoner's eye, and bade him await a convenient season, which never came.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 10. Then Paul. Tertullus, the advocate of Paul's accusers, had made his plea, and the apostle rose to answer it. **The governor.** See the note on Felix with verse 24 of the last lesson. **Beckoned him.** Literally, "nodded to him." The haughty ruler gave a nod to the chained prisoner, little dreaming that only through that same prisoner he would ever be known to coming ages. **Forasmuch as I know.** The speech of Tertullus is loaded down with hypocritical flatteries: Paul compliments the governor only on the duration of his rule, which has given him opportunity to become acquainted with the subjects in dispute. **Of many years a judge.** Six or seven years, much longer than most rulers of Palestine in those turbulent times. **Answer for myself.** The Rev. Ver., "make my defense," or "vindicate myself." (1) *The Christian can be both courteous and sincere to all men.*

11. There are yet but twelve days. As his departure from Cesarea as a pilgrim and his return thither as a prisoner were but nine days apart, it behooved his enemies to prove that all the crimes with which they charged him could have been committed in so short a time. **I went up.** From that very city of Cesarea in which he now stood on trial. **To worship.** One who had gone up to worship would not wish to profane the temple.

12. Neither found me in the temple. He had gone to the temple as a worshiper and in fulfillment of the Nazarite's vow, and not to stir up strife. **Raising up the people.** Rev. Ver., "stirring up a crowd." It was *they* who had excited the tumult, not the apostle. **Neither in the synagogues.** These were the local meetings for reading the law and exhortation; which Paul could not have visited during his brief stay, for he was most of the time in the temple.

13. Neither can they prove. Here was the pith of the case. They had made vague, wild assertions against Paul, hoping that the governor might be influenced to condemn him without trial, as doubtless he would have done, but for his Roman citizenship. They very well knew that their charges could not be proven under the Roman law.

14. But this I confess. They had charged that he was "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." This he was not ashamed to own, for in it he was but following the religion of his fathers and the commands of his own conscience. **After the way.** "The way" appears to have been the current term for the fellowship of the Gospel before the word "Christian" was generally accepted. **Which they call heresy.** Rev. Ver., "which they call a sect." The word in the original is that from which *heresy* is derived, and is the one translated *sect* in verse 5. They had called the believers "a sect," and Paul does not disown the name, for it meant simply a school of religious opinion. **So worship I.** Rev. Ver., "So serve I;" a word including worship, but wider in meaning. **The God of my fathers.** He was not a schismatic, nor an apostate. He served the God that Abraham, and Moses, and David had served; and believed in the Messiah for whom they had hoped. **Believing all things.** He declared himself to be a true Jew, and denied that in accepting Jesus as the Christ he had forsaken the faith of his fathers. To him, the Old Testament Scriptures were not less, but greater, than they had been. (2) *Let us ever be ready to own Christ as our Master.* (3) *All God's people, in every age and land, have been members of one true Church.* (4) *The germs of all religious truth are to be found in the Old Testament.*

15. Have hope toward God. That is, a hope founded on God's promise, and expecting realization through God's power. **They themselves also allow.** Rev. Ver., "look for." The hope of the resurrection, to which Paul refers, was cherished not only by the Pharisees, but by the mass of the Jewish people. **A resurrection of the dead.** Some modern critics tell us that the Old Testament gives no thought of a life to come or of a resurrection. But here was an ancient student, and with him a whole people, who found in the old Testament their warrant for a firm belief in immortality. **Just and unjust.** A hint, which Felix might well consider, that the unjust judge on earth shall stand before a supreme tribunal.

16. Herein. In view of this hope of a resurrection. **Do I exercise myself.** I endeavor. **To have always.** "It is always term-time in the court of conscience." **A conscience void of offense.** The conscience does not tell us what is right, but urges us to do what we know to be right, and to rebuke us for doing what we know to be wrong. **Toward God and toward men.** Many who are faithful to duty as between man and man are strangely neglectful of their duties toward God; which are far more important. (5) *Our beliefs should not only enter into the mind, but also be wrought out in the life.* (6) *Every man should follow his own conscience, not other men's opinions.*

17. After many years. Four years had passed since his last brief visit to Jerusalem, at the close of his second missionary journey. Acts 18. 22. **To bring alms.** This is the only mention in the Acts of the contribution so often referred to in the epistles. Paul had taken among the Gentile Christians a collection for the poorer disciples in Judea, and one of his errands to Jerusalem had been to present it to the Church. **And offerings.** The sacrifices which he offered in the temple in fulfillment of the Nazarite's vow.

18, 19. Certain Jews from Asia. (See Notes on Lesson VI, verse 27.) These were Jews from proconsular Asia, the district around Ephesus, who had encountered Paul in the synagogues of that city. **Found me purified.** Not inciting a tumult, nor violating the law, but fulfilling the ceremonial observances of purification. **Who ought.** The sentence in the original is broken in such a manner as to suggest "They found me purified in the temple; not these who make the charge, but certain Jews from Asia, who ought to have been here in person," etc. **Here before thee.** It was the Roman, as it is the modern, usage for the accused and the accusers to be brought face to face; but these Asiatic Jews, who were Paul's real accusers, had not shown themselves in his trial. (7) *Observe how in the hour of need Christ makes his follower more than a match for his adversaries.*

20, 21. Let these same here. The representatives of the council, who were present, not the Asiatic Jews. **Any evil doing.** Rev. Ver., "what wrong-doing they found." Paul calls upon them to testify, not to hearsay reports, but to their own knowledge, and refers to the only time when he had met these men, in the council, a few days before. **Stood before the council.** As related in Lesson VIII. **Except it be.** The only charge that could be sustained was, that before the council he had avowed his belief in the resurrection of the dead; and that this had been followed by a riot, not of his friends, but among themselves. As Meyer says, there was "a holy irony" in this declaration.

22. Having more perfect knowledge. The Rev.

Ver. is, "having more exact knowledge concerning the way," that is, the Gospel, and its followers. From this, and from his desire to hear Paul "concerning the faith in Christ," it is evident that Felix knew more than most Roman rulers about Christianity. He was living at Cesarea, where a Gentile Church had been founded among Roman soldiers (Acts 10), and the rapid growth of the Gospel was now making it prominent in the empire. **Deferred them.** Adjourned the case until the chief captain Lysias, who had arrested Paul in the temple, could bring more information. This may have been only a pretext, for he could easily see that the charges against Paul had not been sustained.

23. Commanded a centurion. *The* centurion, (Rev. Ver.), probably the one who had brought him from Jerusalem. **To keep Paul.** He was responsible for his safety, and probably kept him chained to a soldier, but not confined to a cell. **Let him have liberty.** Rather, as in Rev. Ver., *indulgence*, with such favor as would be consistent with safe-keeping. **Forbid none of his acquaintance.** We may picture the visits of Luke, who perhaps at this time wrote his Gospel, or made preparation for it; of Aristarchus, who was with the apostle both before and after this time; and of Philip and his family, who lived in Cesarea.

24. With his wife Drusilla. She was the sister of the "King Agrippa" of the next chapter, and like all the Herodian women, handsome, but wicked. She is called the wife of Felix by courtesy, for she had left her lawful husband to live with him. She perished in the eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 79. **A Jewess.** By birth, education, and belief, but far below the morals of honest Judaism. **He sent for Paul.** From idle curiosity to learn concerning the Gospel from its leading advocate, mingled, perhaps, with a slight quickening of conscience. **The faith in Christ.** Here meaning the truths which were held by believers in Christ. (8) *Inquiry may lead to salvation, or it may only load the inquirer with greater guilt.*

25. He reasoned. In public Paul treated Felix as a judge; in private he preached to him as a sinner. **Righteousness.** This refers to all moral duties, both toward God and man, in which Felix was utterly wanting. **Temperance.** Here meaning *self-control*, or the mastery over passion, appetite, and lust; a bold message to the guilty pair whom he addressed. **Judgment to come.** He warned the unjust governor, whose hands were stained with blood, of a trial when Felix himself would stand before a Judge whose sentence should be for eternity. Paul's sermon was bold, practical, and adapted to the character of his hearers. (9) *He who preaches the Gospel needs the courage that comes from on high.* (10) *The law should be proclaimed before the Gospel.* **Felix trembled.** Rev. Ver., "Was terrified." It was an inward trembling, rather than outward, yet Felix may have his fear upon his face. **Go thy way.** He was not angry with Paul for his faithfulness, but he was not willing at once to follow his counsels. **A convenient season.** A convenient season for hearing, not for repentance, for there was no sign of true penitence in his conduct. (11) *There are still many Felixes in the congregation listening to sermons.*

26. He hoped also that money. He knew that Paul was a leader among the Christians, that he had brought money to Jerusalem, and that there was a strong bond of union among the disciples, but he had no thought of the high principles inculcated in the Gospel, which would forbid bribery. **Given him.** Though to receive a bribe was contrary to Roman law, yet it was thoroughly in accord with the despicable character of Felix, as drawn by all the historians of that day.

27. After two years. Two years of weary imprisonment for the apostle. It is remarkable that we have no epistles written at that time. Perhaps his frame needed its enforced rest, or he may have aided Luke in the preparation of his Gospel. **Porcius Festus.** He succeeded Felix in 60 A.D., and was a just and fair ruler, but died in less than two years. **Show the Jews a pleasure.** Rev. Ver., "desiring to gain favor with the Jews." His desire was to escape accusation before the emperor for his misrule, but he failed, was charged with crime by the Jews, and would have been condemned but for the influence of his brother Pallas. **Left Paul bound.** Chained to a soldier, but not all the time confined to a cell.

HOME READINGS.

M. Paul before Felix. Acts 24. 10-27.
Tu. Tertullus's speech. Acts 24. 1-9.
W. Faith with chastisement. Heb. 12. 1-14.
Th. A good conscience. 1 Pet. 3. 13-22.
F. Law of love. 1 John 3. 18-24.
S. No fear of man. Dan. 6. 10-17.
S. True worship. Psa. 29. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

A conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. Acts 24. 16.

LESSON HYMN. L. M

Hymnal, No. 448

Still let thy wisdom be my guide,
Nor take thy flight from me away;
Still with me let thy grace abide
That I from thee may never stray:
Let thy word richly in me dwell,
Thy peace and love my portion be;
My joy to endure and do thy will,
Till perfect I am found in thee.

From faith to faith, from grace to grace,
So in thy strength shall I go on,
Till heaven and earth flee from thy face,
And glory end what grace begun.

TIME.—This lesson extends through two years, from A. D. 58-60.

PLACE.—Cesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine.

RULERS.—While Paul was a prisoner Felix was recalled, and Porcius Festus was appointed Procurator of Palestine; Ananias was deposed from the high-priesthood, and Ishmael took his place; Quadratus, Prefect of Syria, died, and was succeeded by Corbulo; Nero, the wickedest of the emperors, was still reigning at Rome.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The power of conscience.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A Good Confession, v. 10-16.
Before whom was Paul brought?
What charges were preferred against Paul?
How did Paul answer to the first charge?
How does he reply to the second?
In what did he profess belief?

2. A Plain Statement, v. 17-21.
To what charge does Paul now reply?
For what did Paul go to the temple?
Whom did he say should have appeared against him?
Of what was their absence a proof?
To whom did Paul allude in verse 20?
What only thing could they bring against him?

3. A Long Delay, v. 22-27.
On what pretext did Felix postpone the case?
On what did Paul discourse?
Why did not Felix release Paul?
Still later, why did he leave him a prisoner?

Practical Teachings.

How does this lesson show—

1. The advantage of a good conscience?
2. The advantage of right-doing?
3. The advantage of the truth?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Good Confession, v. 10-16.
At whose invitation did Paul speak?
What encouraged him?
Where had Paul been?
What charges did he deny?
What confession did he make?
What hope sustained him?
What motive ruled him?

2. A Plain Statement, v. 17-21.
On what errand had Paul gone to Jerusalem?
Whose absence did he censure?
What challenge did Paul give?
What did he admit?

3. A Long Delay, v. 22-27.
Who postponed the trial?
To whose charge was Paul committed?
What privileges were granted him?
On what occasion was he recalled?
How was Felix affected by his argument?
What excuse did he make for sending him away?
Why was Paul often brought before Felix?
How long was Paul left a prisoner?
For what reason?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The boldness of a clear conscience?
2. The power of divine truth?
3. The excuses of a worldly-minded man?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

A few days after, where was Paul brought? **Before Felix for trial.**

What had the Jews told Felix about Paul? **A great many lies.** [Read your Lesson Story carefully.]

How long did Paul say it had been since he went to Jerusalem? **Only twelve days.**

What did this prove? **That he had not had time to do so many wrong things.**

How did he say he had tried to live? **In such a way as to have**—[Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.]

What more did he tell Felix? **All that took place in the temple.**

Did Felix believe him? **He did.**

What did he do with him? **Ordered him to be kept in prison, but treated kindly.**

Why did he not let him go? **He wanted to please the Jews.**

Had he any other reason? **He hoped to get money for setting him free.**

What kind of a man do you think Felix was? And why?

A few days after, what did he do? **Sent for Paul to speak to him and his wife.**

What did Paul talk about? **Doing right in every thing.**

What else? **The day when we shall have to stand before God and be judged.**

How did it make Felix feel? **He trembled, and sent him away.**

Two years after, where did Festus, the new governor, find him? **Bound in the prison.**

Words with Little People.

It is a great, solemn truth, dear children, that Christ will *certainly* come to be our judge some day. Does it make *you* tremble and feel afraid to think that "he will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing?" Those wicked things you tried to *hide* from *mother* and *father* and *every one.* You need not be afraid if you will remember that Christ came *first* to *save* you. He will forgive all your sins *before* that great day. O ask him to keep your hearts clean *every* day, and then you will not fear him as your *Judge,* because he is your *Saviour.*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Of what did Paul say he had hope? **Of the resurrection of the dead.**

2. Paul exercised himself to have what? **"A conscience void of offense."**

3. Of what did Paul reason before Felix? **"Righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come."**

4. What effect had this on Felix? **He trembled.**

5. How long did Felix keep Paul in prison? **Two years.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

"Bold in Christ." Philemon 8.

I. A CHEERFUL ANSWER.
1. *I do the more cheerfully answer.* v. 10.
"Ready always to give an answer." 1 Pet. 3. 15.
2. *I went up to....worship.* v. 11.
"In spirit and in truth." John 4. 23, 24.
3. *Neither found me....disputing.* v. 12.
"About words to no profit." 2 Tim. 2. 14.
4. *Neither raising up the people.* v. 12.
"No brawlers, but gentle." Titus 3. 2.

II. A FRANK AVOWAL.
1. *This I confess unto thee.* v. 14.
"Not ashamed of the Gospel." Rom. 1. 16.
2. *So worship I....God.* v. 14.
"Looking unto Jesus." Heb. 12. 2.
3. *Believing all things....written.* v. 14.
"Thy will is truth." John 17. 17.
4. *Have hope toward God.* v. 15.
"A lively hope." 1 Pet. 1. 3.
5. *A conscience void of offense.* v. 16.
"A pure heart....good conscience." 1 Tim. 1. 5.

III. A POWERFUL ARGUMENT.
1. *Reasoned of righteousness.* v. 25.
"Which is of God by faith." Phil. 3. 9.
2. *Temperance.* v. 25.
"Keep thyself pure." 1 Tim. 5. 22.
3. *Judgment to come.* v. 25.
"Give account....to God." Rom. 14. 12.
4. *Felix trembled.* v. 25.
"Be troubled, ye careless ones." Isa. 32. 11.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Tokens of a True Christian.

1. The true Christian is cheerful in trial, for he knows that his Saviour is by his side. v. 10.

2. The true Christian is quiet, orderly, and law-abiding in his conduct, for he remembers that God's eye is upon him. v. 11–13.

3. The true Christian is always ready to confess Christ, even in presence of Christ's enemies. v. 14.

4. The true Christian believes all things that are written in the Scriptures. v. 14.

5. The true Christian cherishes a hope of eternal life, and lives in view of it. v. 15.

6. The true Christian seeks always to enjoy a clear conscience toward God and man. v. 16.

7. The true Christian is faithful in speaking against sin, and in seeking to save sinners. v. 25.

English Teacher's Notes.

I read an odd story once of a woman who was famous among her neighbors for her forbidding countenance and her sharp, spiteful tongue. A tradesman who lived opposite to her, and who had often suffered from her angry speech, conceived the idea of having a picture painted of this woman,

which when finished he hung in his shop window. There was no mistaking whom the ugly, forbidding portrait represented, and all the passers-by made very merry over the likeness. When the woman found it out she was furious. She saw that the face was intolerably ugly, distorted by anger and malice, and most repulsive in every way. She knew that it was a good likeness of herself. She saw herself as she habitually looked. Her looking-glass told her that it was correct.

In our passage for to-day we see two men who were brought face to face with a portrait of themselves, and we have to notice the different effect which the pictures had upon each of them.

The first was Paul. As he stood before the judgment-seat of Felix with his enemies round about him, Tertullus, the orator, drew for the governor a portrait of his prisoner. Look at it—"a pestilent fellow," "a mover of sedition," "a ringleader," one who attempted "to profane the temple." A black picture indeed, and if any thing like the original no wonder that men clamored for vengeance upon him. The Jews who stood round about declared that it was correct. What effect had this portrait on the prisoner? Look at his words—calm, courteous, cheerful, no anger, no bitterness, no excitement; he just gives a plain statement of his case. Why was he utterly unmoved by the repulsive picture of himself exhibited by Tertullus? His conscience told him it was not true.

Now look at the other man, Felix, the Roman governor. He sits at ease in his palace, listening for the Jewish prisoner he has sent for to converse with. And Paul is speaking to him from the law of God, telling of what that law requires, of upright dealing between man and man, of self-control and self-restraint in the appetites and passions, and of the doom that hangs over those whom the holy law condemns. And right before the eyes of Felix there rises up his own portrait. He sees a man who has broken that holy law again and again, a man who has defrauded his neighbor, a man who has oppressed the poor, who has enriched himself by extortion, a man dishonest, cruel, impure—a horrible picture! But who has drawn it? Not Paul; his own conscience, awakened by Paul's words, has done it, and can attest the truth of the likeness. It is not like the portrait Tertullus drew of Paul, exhibited before the eyes of other men. But Felix has been hearing of the "judgment to come," and knows that God sees it. And so the picture terrifies him. He dare not go on looking at it. He must put a stop to the words that have called it up, and quiet his conscience. So the preacher of righteousness is dismissed.

But had Paul never trembled at his own portrait? He knew that the picture drawn of him by Tertullus was false, but had he never seen a true one which could dismay him? Surely yes, during those three dark days at Damascus when he was "without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (chap. 9. 9); when he saw himself as the "chief of sinners," "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious." 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. But the terrible lines of that portrait had been effaced by the cleansing blood of Christ, and though the "chief of sinners" remained, it was a sinner washed, a sinner pardoned, a sinner justified, a sinner saved and made an heir to glory. Rom. 8. 26, etc. Was there then no danger that the portrait might become again disfigured by sin? Certainly, we learn from Rom. 7. 18, etc., that there was. Yet there was provision for this need: Who shall deliver me? "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And so Paul could say: "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men."

Let our boys and girls ask themselves this question: What if a true portrait of me were placed before my eyes—should I like it? Should I like others to see it? Should I be dismayed at the thought that God sees it? Would conscience reproach me for it? It was a fine and shrewd saying of America's murdered President, that in all things he must have the approval of James Garfield, because it was unendurable to eat, drink, and sleep with a man whom you disapproved. It was declaring in another form that he must have a portrait of himself which conscience would not condemn. It is a terrible thing to shut one's eyes, as Felix did, to one's own portrait. If we can hide sinful features from our own sight, and even from the sight of others, we cannot hide them from the sight of God. Better feel the bitterness and burden of them, as Paul did at Damascus, and get the hateful likeness blotted out in the blood of Christ.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

In the teachers' meeting the lesson may be considered under "the Five W's."....1. *When?* How long after the last lesson? How account for the twelve days? How long period in the lesson?....2. *Where?* The place, location, history, Bible incidents, present condition?....3. *Who?* Paul, and his character? Felix, and his character?....4. *What?* The events and facts of the lesson, with the difficulties suggested by them?.... 5. *What then?* Our interest in this lesson, what we may learn from it?....For the class, see Thoughts for Young People....Show in Paul some of the traits of character which the Gospel will impart, and in Felix the evil of indecision in religion.. .Dwell upon the importance of a prompt and a right choice, and the danger of delay.... ILLUSTRATIONS. On the day when Julius Cæsar was assassinated he received a letter, which he put aside, saying, "Business to-morrow." That letter contained a warning of his danger, and if he had read it at once his life might have been saved....The longer the delay, the heavier the price, and the less the reward of religion. A sybil came into the presence of Tarquin, king of Rome, with nine books of prophecy, for which she demanded a great price. Being refused, she went away, destroyed three books, and returned with six, for which she asked a still higher sum of money. Again refused, she came back a third time with only three volumes, for which she demanded thrice as much as for the whole nine. They were purchased, and found to be of priceless value. Such is salvation. At its greatest price it is infinitely precious, but the longer it is postponed the harder it is to be won.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Ah, Felix, you sit there in your governor's chair as the representative of proud, imperial Rome, your conscience drowsy over your flagrant sins; but do you know that an earthquake is on its way to your conscience that will shake it up and humble you, though Rome is at your back? No sign of humiliation to-day. Your frowning Roman guards near you—how you look down upon and contemn this petty Jewish squabble that has come before you! There is Ananias, the high-priest, with a lip curled in greater pride than yours—how you despise him and his restless, querulous elders! And Tertullus, that soft-tongued orator who is pasting the salve of his flattery over your sins—you have small respect for him. This Jew before you, this criminal chained to his Roman guard, this so-called Paul and the object of the hate of that contemptible Ananias and his contemptible elders—what do you think of him? You certainly do not fear him. No earthquake packed in him. Let him be in a centurion's generous care till "Lysias, the chief captain, shall come down." Clear the hall of this swarm of fanatics! Away they go, haughty, crestfallen Ananias, sneering elders, that salve-box, Tertullus. Paul, in a short time you may come again, and what? Preach Christ before Felix and Drusilla! Does Felix realize what he is doing when he sends for Paul? Does Drusilla? There they sit on the appointed day, Felix the governor burdened with his sins, and at his side the beautiful Drusilla married by Felix when the lawful wife of another man. Before them is that plain, serious Jew, the leader of a strange sect who follow the despised Nazarene, Jesus. How his eyes kindle as he tells of his beloved Jesus! How his voice rings out! His sentences, charged with righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, are shot straight home. What is the matter, Felix? Why do you tremble? Is the earthquake under your conscience, arousing and ejecting from their graves ugly old sins? Stop, Paul, stop! The Roman governor is waving his hand. Enough, enough! He will "call for thee" at "a convenient season." The hall is quickly deserted, and back to their graves in the soul of Felix sink the ugly memories that have arisen to trouble him. Will they not awake and come forth again?

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Voice of God in the Soul.*

INTRODUCTORY. Question upon the last lesson and tell enough of the intervening history to make a connected story in the minds of the children. Speak of the little army, four hundred and seventy men, that guarded Paul on his way to Cesarea. Tell that he was going there to be tried before Felix, the Roman governor. Tell that Paul's enemies went to Cesarea too, to make charges against him. Ask if any of the children have ever been in court. Give some idea of what it is like—the prisoner before the judge—the accusers—the people looking on.

PAUL'S DEFENSE.

Teach that people who are brought to trial have done wrong, usually; but Paul was here brought to be judged because he had done right. So his accusers had to tell lies about him. What did Paul say in reply? Only the truth. He told just what he had done, and denied the false charges. Tell how calmly he spoke. He was not angry when he was falsely accused. He pitied the wicked men who told falsehoods about him. Tell the result of the trial, picturing Paul in a pleasant room, receiving his dear friends, Philip and Timothy and Luke, and perhaps others, who were also at Cesarea. So Paul could still preach the Gospel, though a prisoner.

FELIX HEARING PAUL.

Tell the children that Felix was a great sinner. He was once a slave but had been set free, and put in high places, because he was willing to do any wicked things he was asked to do. After Paul had been in Cesarea a little while Felix sent for him to come and speak to him and his wicked young wife Drusilla. What did Paul talk about? Their sins? No, but the pure and holy Jesus, who came to be the Saviour of sinners. Then he spoke of Jesus as the holy Judge of those who would not give up their sins. This made Felix tremble. Why? He was afraid of sin, because it leads to death. But he said, "I will not give it up now: I will wait a while longer."

GOD'S VOICE TO US.

Paul was God's voice to Felix. God had put a voice into his soul, but Felix had not listened to it. Now it had grown so faint that he could not hear it. Tell that we are in danger of stifling God's voice as Felix did. If we do not obey it, it will cease to speak. Teach that conscience is God's voice. Paul obeyed it; Felix disobeyed. Which one do we want to be like?

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

There is danger in delay. Felix trembled, but said, "Go thy way." If you feel a conviction of sin unpardoned, do not wait for a convenient season; *now* is the accepted time. The anvil represents the present NOW. *Conviction* is the iron, waiting for the *hammer of repentance.* If you delay, the iron will grow cold.

TO-DAY	IF YOU SAY **NOW**, "GO THY WAY,"
JUDGMENT DAY	GOD MAY SAY **THEN**, "GO THY WAY."

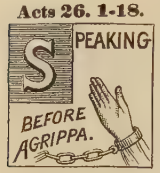
PAUL'S PREACHING

(Draw an arrow)

Aimed at the consciences of men.

A. D. 60.] LESSON XI. PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA. [March 15.

Acts 26. 1-18. [*Commit to memory verses* 16-18.]



1 Then A-grip'pa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 I think myself happy, king A-grip'pa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

3 Especially *because I know* thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Je-ru'sa-lem, know all the Jews;

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Phar'i-see.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

7 Unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king A-grip'pa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Je'sus of Naz'a reth.

10 Which thing I also did in Je-ru'sa-lem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*.

11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.

12 Whereupon as I went to Da-mas'cus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the He'brew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Je'sus, whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee:

17 Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gen'tiles, unto whom now I send thee,

18 To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Sa'tan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

General Statement.

Two years passed, Felix gave place to Festus, and still Paul languished in the prison at Cesarea. The Jews were thirsting for his blood, and laid a plot to have him brought to Jerusalem under pretense of trial, with the purpose of effecting his murder on the way. But Paul by the utterance of a single sentence brought all their schemes to naught. When he said, "I appeal to Cæsar," his case was at once transferred from the procurator at Cesarea to the emperor at Rome. Just at that time a royal visitor came to Cesarea, Agrippa, the last of the Herods. To give him an opportunity of hearing the famous prisoner, Festus appointed a public gathering, where the princes and noble ladies sat surrounded by their courtiers and the men at arms. It may be that the watchful Luke was there with his tablets to record the scene, for the story reads like the sketch of an eye-witness. Paul was brought forth, chained to a soldier, and with cheeks pallid from two years in prison, yet despite his bonds the freest and loftiest soul in the company. A few words of explanation were proffered by Festus, and then Agrippa signified to Paul that he might state his case. His address, of which we have but the outline, was a wonderful specimen of oratory. He was speaking before a Jewish prince, who was thoroughly versed in all the subtleties of Jewish thought, who knew the law, and could understand Paul's position as no Roman could. The apostle showed that in the Christian faith he was but cherishing the hope which was the central thought of Judaism, and the culmination of prophecy. He related his experience, what he had been as an enemy of the Gospel, how he had been converted, and the life he had led since that great day on the Syrian plain when he saw the Lord.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. Agrippa. He was the son of the Herod Agrippa who slew James and imprisoned Peter. Acts 12. The Romans did not permit him to reign over all the dominions of his father, but gave him the principality of Bashan, east of the Sea of Galilee. After the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, he was dethroned, but permitted to retain his wealth, and lived at Rome until A. D. 100. He was immoral in life, but not unjust in his rule, and is considered the best of the Herodian family. **Thou art permitted.** This was not a formal trial, for Agrippa could neither condemn nor acquit Paul, since he had appealed to the emperor. It was a hearing, to give Paul an opportunity to explain his views, and Festus information upon which to make his report to the government at Rome. **Stretched forth the hand.** A gesture usual among ancient speakers in beginning a formal address. **Answered for himself.** Paul shows what was his deepest thought, by saying little in defense of himself, but much in behalf of his Master. (1) *Let us hide ourselves behind the cross of Christ.*

2, 3. I think myself happy. He felt that it was a privilege to set forth his views before one who was at once an influential prince, and an intelligent Jew, acquainted with the Scriptures, and able to understand spiritual truth. **Expert in all customs.** As a Jew, he was familiar with all the Jewish usages, which were inexplicable to a heathen. **And questions.** The Herods were Sadducees in belief, accepting the Old Testament Scriptures, but denying the reality of a future life; but Agrippa would doubtless be familiar with the questions which were argued between the various schools of Jewish thought. **Hear me patiently.** Not much stretch of patience would be necessary, however, to listen to an address as eloquent as that which fell from Paul's lips on that day.

4. My manner of life. His career had been public, from his earliest years, and he points to his record as a Jew with honest confidence. (2) *Let every young man look forward to a time when he may need to show a clean record, and be careful how he stains it.* **From my youth.** This would show that he came to Jerusalem when quite young; perhaps at the age of twelve years, when Jewish boys began their education. **Know all the Jews.** Not to be understood literally, but meaning that his name was widely known among his people.

5. Which knew me. The connection is "All the Jews know, having knowledge of me from the beginning, that," etc. **If they would testify.** This they would not do, for their testimony would avail to the advantage of the Gospel. **The most straitest.** The word *most* is unnecessary; "the very strictest" is the meaning. **Sect.** The same word translated "heresy" in verse 14 of the last lesson, and meaning "a school of thought." **I lived a Pharisee.** The Pharisees were indeed exceedingly strict in their interpretation of the law, and applied it to the most minute details of life. It was almost impossible to live correctly according to their requirements in any save a Jewish community. Paul emphasizes this to show that he was not influenced by lax views of the Jewish law, in his conception of Christianity.

6. And now I stand. Strange as it might seem, it was this very fidelity to Jewish principles that made him now a prisoner on trial; for he believed that the promise made to the fathers had been fulfilled, and to that belief he owed his chain. **For the hope of the promise.** That is, because of his confidence in the promise of God, now fulfilled in the coming of Christ. Agrippa, as a Jew, knew that this was the promise of

a Messiah or Deliverer; but it was not prudent to explain it more definitely before the Roman Festus, who might see in it some political danger to Rome. **Unto our fathers.** For many centuries, from Abraham to Malachi, the promise of a Redeemer had been growing more bright in the horizon of Jewish thought. But Paul was the only one in the company who believed that it had been accomplished.

7. Our twelve tribes. In the original one word, "our twelvetribedom." Paul sees the spiritual Israel, scattered throughout the world, all united in the common hope of a Messiah. **Instantly.** Earnestly. **Serving God day and night.** He refers to the constancy with which the Jews, dispersed among heathen nations, and enduring the most bitter persecution, still clung to their religion, and their expectation of a Redeemer. No people on earth deserve as great honor as the Jews for their fidelity to their national faith. **Hope to come.** Hope to realize. Every Jew on earth looked forward to the coming of One who was to lift up their nation, and make them the royal people, ruling over the world. Compare with Paul's address before Felix in the last lesson, and notice the thoroughly Jewish thought that pervades this, given to a Jewish prince, while that was to a Roman official. **For which hope's sake.** Because he believed that the long-expected Saviour had come, while they were still in expectancy. **Accused of the Jews.** Omit the article; "accused by *Jews*," who of all men ought to welcome a Saviour's appearing.

8. Why should it be thought. In the brief outline of Paul's discourse, the connection appears to be, that Paul considered "the hope of the promise" attained in Jesus, who was shown to be the Messiah by his resurrection from the dead. **A thing incredible with you.** Agrippa as a Jew accepted the Old Testament, which was filled with instances of miraculous working. **With you** is emphatic, *you*, who believe the Scriptures; *you*, who know that there is a God, and that he is omnipotent. **God should raise the dead.** Since the resurrection of Jesus was the all-convincing evidence of the Gospel. Paul asserts it with emphasis to Agrippa, who was a Sadducee, and disbelieved in any resurrection. In his argument, Paul puts infidelity on the defensive, by asking, "Why not believe?" (3) *In talking with unbelievers be aggressive, and ask, rather than answer, questions.*

9. I verily thought. He pleads with the power of personal experience. "I once was where you are, nay, in a far more open enmity to the Gospel." **With myself.** That is, after earnest thoughtfulness and with sincere purpose. **I ought.** He had sought to find out what he ought to do, even while he was a persecutor. **Contrary to the name.** The name is put here and elsewhere for the cause or the principles which that name represented. (4) *The pleader for Christ should place himself in sympathy with those whom he seeks to win.* (5) *How few men take "ought" as the rule of their lives!* (6) *He who sincerely follows his conscience, and seeks for light, will surely come to knowledge of God's will.*

10. Which thing. Acts of violent opposition to the Gospel. These acts are stated to show the reality of, and the divine power in, his conversion. **Many of the saints.** "The holy ones," a term for followers of Christ, used more than forty times in Paul's epistles, here employed to show the character of those he was persecuting. (7) *The very name for Christians tells what they should be.* **They were put to death.** Though only Stephen is named, there may have been other martyrs in that earliest persecution. **I gave my voice.** Literally, "my vote," from which some have inferred that Paul had been a member of the Sanhedrin, or supreme council of the Jews.

11. I punished them. Literally, "took vengeance upon them." **In every synagogue.** Church and State were one among the Jews, and hence sentence of beating was inflicted in the synagogue, and in presence of the elders. **Compelled them to blaspheme.** The Rev. Ver. more correctly, "strove to make them blaspheme," as it is probable that some of the weaker in faith did renounce their faith, for the Jerusalem Church never again rose to its former strength. **Exceedingly mad.** Like a raging maniac in his hatred of the Gospel. **Strange cities.** Rev. Ver., "foreign cities." Yet in all his sincerity there was a disturbing conscience, the pricks and stings of which he felt and wrestled with. Intellectually he believed he was right, in his heart he felt that he was wrong.

12. Whereupon. Compare with this account of his conversion, the one given in Lesson VII. and the record in Acts 9. **Went to Damascus.** A city 133 miles north of Jerusalem, and one of the two capitals of Syria. **With authority.** His purpose was to arrest the leading disciples, and bring them to Jerusalem for punishment.

13. At midday. When the sun was shining at its brightest hour. **A light from heaven.** This flash revealed to his dazzled eyes the form of his Saviour, and was the cause of his blindness. **Above the brightness.** This was the glory of God, seen by Stephen, and the radiance of the risen Saviour. See Heb. 1. 3. (8) *When we have dropped this robe of flesh, we may look upon that glorious face.*

14. All fallen. A sudden terror fell upon the whole company. They saw a light, and heard a sound, but Saul alone received the vision. **In the Hebrew tongue.** This he mentions, because he is now speaking in Greek. **Saul, Saul.** (9) *Every soul under the influence of the Gospel at some time in his life hears God's voice addressing him personally.* **Persecutest thou me?** So close is the tie between the Church on earth and its Head in heaven, that the Saviour is sensitive to every wrong done to his people. **To kick against the pricks.** Rev. Ver., "Against the goad." The goad against which Saul was striving in vain was the voice of his own conscience, which ever since he had looked upon Stephen's shining face, and heard his dying prayer, had been troubling him.

15. Who art thou, Lord? It was a strange face and an unfamiliar voice to Saul, but soon he needed not to ask who it was when his Saviour spoke. (10) *Let us seek acquaintance and intimacy with our Redeemer.* **I am Jesus.** Not the spirit of a dead man, but a living Christ, risen to die no more.

16. But rise. The incident of Ananias's visit is not related, as it was not important to Paul's story, and would have no weight with Agrippa or Festus. Some parts of the message through Ananias are here referred directly to the vision. Paul's purpose was not to give details, but to show that his life since that day was in exact accordance with a command received from Christ. **For this purpose.** The great purpose of the vision was not Paul's conversion, but to make him a minister to other men. **To make thee.** Rev. Ver., "to appoint thee." Literally, "to place a hand upon thee," that is, as if Christ laid his mighty hand upon Saul, choosing him out and sending him forth. **A minister and a witness.** The two aspects of the Gospel worker, on one side a servant of Christ, on the other a witness bearing testimony to his own experience. **These things .... those things.** He is to be a witness to the power of Christ in his own salvation, and to the further revelations which shall be vouchsafed to him. (11) *Every Christian can tell his own experience, and even an apostle could do no greater work.* **I will appear.** Visions of his Redeemer were given to Paul in the temple (Act 22. 18); at Corinth (Acts 18. 9, 10), and at various times during his ministry. (12) *How delightful to live in communion with the Lord!*

17. Delivering thee. He was forewarned of tribulations, but promised victory over them. **From the people.** "The people" is a term always referring to the Jews. As Saul the Jew had persecuted, so must Paul the Christian meet with persecution. **The Gentiles, unto whom.** From the hour of his conversion Paul felt the mantle of Stephen upon his shoulders, and his peculiar mission to be to proclaim salvation to Gentiles on the same terms as to Jews; a mission exposing him to a triple hatred, from Jews, unbelieving Gentiles, and Judaizing Christians.

18. To open their eyes. In this voice are named the great blessings which the Gospel brings, and its sole condition. Its first work is to open the eyes of men to their true condition as sinners, and to their high privilege as children of God. Men are wicked because they are blind, and by faith the spiritual eyes are enlightened. **From darkness to light.** Every sinner and unbeliever is in darkness, and every true believer in Christ walks in the light. **Power of Satan unto God.** Every soul out of Christ is a bondman, under Satan's mastery. Christ comes to set men free, and the Gospel is the world's "proclamation of emancipation." **Receive forgiveness of sins.** A righteous forgiveness can only be given when the sentence has been met. Christ has paid our penalty, and we can be free and pardoned. **Inheritance.** Not only future, but present, for every child of God is now an heir of spiritual riches in the Gospel. **By faith.** Here is the sole requirement for all these blessings, light, liberty, pardon, inheritance, holiness, all obtained by faith, or trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation. (13) *Teacher, bring this verse of the lesson, if no other, to the hearts of your class!*

HOME READINGS.

M. Paul before Agrippa. Acts 26. 1-18.
Tu. Paul before Festus. Acts 25. 1-12.
W. Agrippa hears of Paul. Acts 25. 13-27.
Th. The promise of God. 2 Sam. 7. 12-17.
F. Firm in hope. Heb. 3. 1-15.
S. Changed through Christ. 1 Tim. 1. 12-20.
S. Receiving the inheritance. Col. 3. 16-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Acts 26. 15.

LESSON HYMN. L. M.

Hymnal, No. 814.

The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wandering souls of men;
With cries, entreaties, tears, to save,—
To snatch them from the gaping grave.

My life, my blood, I here present,
If for thy truth they may be spent;
Fulfill thy sovereign counsel, Lord;
Thy will be done, thy name adored.

Give me thy strength, O God of power:
Then let winds blow, or thunders roar,
Thy faithful witness will I be;
'Tis fixed; I can do all through thee.

TIME.—A. D. 60, probably in the summer, a few weeks after the rule of Festus began.

PLACE.—Cesarea.

RULERS.—Festus, Procurator of Palestine: Agrippa II., King of Bashan; Corbulo, Prefect of Syria; Ishmael, Jewish high-priest; Nero, Emperor of Rome.

CONNECTING LINK.—As soon as Festus became Procurator, the Jews began to renew their charges against Paul. Festus offered him a trial at Jerusalem, but Paul, as a Roman citizen, appealed to the emperor's court at Rome. Agrippa II., King of Bashan, desired to hear Paul, and our lesson contains a part of Paul's address in his presence. This was not a trial, but rather an examination.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Conversion from sin.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Orator's Opening, v. 1-3.
What was the charge made against Paul?
How did he begin his defense?
Why was he pleased to answer Agrippa?
What request did he make of the king?

2. The Pharisee's Record, v. 4-11.
What did Paul say of his own life?
To what sect did he belong?
Of what did he say he was judged?
What question did he ask concerning the resurrection?
How had he formerly felt toward Jesus?
What did he confess to have done?

3. The Christian's Call, v. 12-18.
What wonderful event did he narrate?
Who appeared to him in the vision?
What did he wish to make of Paul?
To whom was the apostle to be sent?
What results were promised to him?

Practical Teachings.

How does this lesson illustrate—

1. The pleasure of addressing intelligent hearers?
2. An honest man led astray?
3. The honest man's restoration?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Orator's Opening, v. 1-3.
What king is named here?
Who had been brought before him?
What permission was granted Paul?
How did the apostle greet the king?
What compliment did he pay him?
What request did he make?

2. The Pharisee's Record, v. 4-11.
Where had Paul spent a part of his life?
Who had known of his habits?
Of what sect was Paul a member?
For what was he to be judged?
How was this promise fulfilled? Acts 13. 32.
What had this Pharisee believed to be his duty?

3. The Christian Call, v. 12-18.
What had he done to the saints?
To what city did he journey?
What appeared to him on the way?
Who revealed himself to Paul?
What command did Jesus give?
What was Paul now to become?
To what work was he called?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That zeal is not godliness?
2. That in injuring God's servants we are fighting against God?
3. That the Lord has a service for those whom he calls?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Before whom was Paul next brought? **King Agrippa.**
What did the king to him? **"You may speak for yourself."**
What did Paul answer? **"I think myself happy, King Agrippa, to speak before you."**
What did he ask him? **To hear him to the end, and then judge.**
Where did he say he had lived from his youth? **Among the Jews.**
What did they know? **That he had been faithful to all the laws of the Jewish religion.**
Of what was he accused? **Believing that the dead would be raised.**
What did he say this hope was to the Jews? **The very promise made by God to their fathers.**
Where, then, was there any difference in their belief? **The Jews were still waiting and hoping for it to come.**
What did Paul believe? **That because Jesus died and rose again, it had come.**
What had Paul "honestly" done as an enemy of Christ? **Hated, beaten, and put in prison men and women, etc.**
When did he stop persecuting them? [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]
What did he then tell the king? **About his conversion, as in the seventh lesson.**
What did he say the Lord made him at that time? **His minister and witness.**
To whom was he sent? **To all the people.**

Words with Little People.

You can be a little witness for Christ, bearing the *same* message *he* gave to *Paul*, if you will only—Tell some one about Jesus that don't know about him. Ask them to turn from Satan to Christ. Tell them their sins may be forgiven. Tell them about the beautiful home in heaven. Read verse 18 of your lesson. Will you?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Why did Paul account himself happy? **Because he spoke for himself.**
2. For what was Paul judged? **For the hope of God's promise.**
3. What did God promise? **That he would raise the dead.**
4. For what purpose was Paul sent to the Gentiles? **"To open their eyes."**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The New Creature.

I. A NEW JOY.
I think myself happy. v. 2.
"We joy in God through....Christ." Rom. 5. 11.
"Rejoice in the Lord alway." Phil. 4. 4.

II. A NEW LIFE.
I lived a Pharisee. v. 5.
"Gain to me....loss for Christ." Phil. 3. 7.
"Ye are not under law." Rom. 6. 14.

III. A New Hope.
The hope of the promise. v. 6.
"Looking for that blessed hope." Titus 2. 13.
"Hope maketh not ashamed." Rom. 5. 5.
IV. A New Motive.
Contrary to the name of Jesus. v. 9.
"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." Rom. 1. 1.
"Whose I am and whom I serve." Acts 27. 23.
V. A New Experience.
Saw a light....heard a voice. v. 13, 14.
"We have seen and heard, declare." 1 John 1. 3.
"Eye-witnesses of his majesty." 2 Pet. 1. 16.
VI. A New Purpose.
A minister and a witness. v. 16.
"Separated unto the Gospel." Rom. 1. 1.
"It pleased God....I might preach." Gal. 1. 15, 16.
VII. A New Character.
Sanctified by faith. v. 18.
"Made unto us....sanctification." 1 Cor. 1. 30.
"Sanctify them through thy truth." John 17. 17.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Conversion of a Sinner.

1. It is a wonderful proof of God's grace and power that any sinner can be converted, much more so bitter an enemy of the Gospel as Saul of Tarsus, who had helped to slay the saints. If he could be saved, there is hope for any man.

2. Even while the sinner is pursuing his evil way, he finds it hard to kick against the pricks of his conscience, which tells him that he is in the wrong. v. 14.

3. Christ comes to the sinner in the very midst of his career, while raging with hate against his Saviour, and speaks to his heart with a mighty power. v. 14.

4. The honest man, convinced that he is doing wrong, turns at once, submits to Christ, and finds mercy and salvation. v. 15–18.

5. The converted sinner, out of his own experience of salvation, is the man best fitted to carry the message of mercy to other men. v. 18.

English Teacher's Notes.

The account of Paul's conversion is given three times over in the Book of the Acts. And though the narrative is substantially the same in all cases, each version gives some detail which is omitted in the others, and adds something to the interest of the wonderful story. In all three accounts there is a striking contrast presented between the old life of Paul and the new; but in his own speech before Agrippa there is something further. A deep undertone of harmony is seen to underlie the strange contrast, which justifies, if I may so speak, the startling transition and the entire change.

A man is traveling in hot haste in a certain direction. Suddenly he stops, turns, and with equal or even greater eagerness, pursues his journey in the contrary direction. Has he changed his purpose? No; but he has found out his mistake. The first road, though he was not aware of it, was leading him really away from the goal he desired to reach. On discovering this what marvel is it if he swiftly and with all possible energy moves off in the opposite way? So it had been with Paul. And the fullest description of his journey along the old road is given in the speech before Agrippa.

His life had not been an idle or a careless one. He had been a strict Pharisee, and had taken an active part in the persecution of the sect called Nazarenes. Chap. 24. 5. An energetic man was required to find out the offenders, hunt them up and secure them in prison, and this had been his work. But there was more. He had been present at the trial of those secured, and had done all in his power to force them to blaspheme Him whom they worshiped; though the word "compelled" does not necessarily imply that he had succeeded. When they stood firm, and the votes of the council were taken as to their doom, he had voted for their death, and had been present, apparently, at other martyrdoms following that of Stephen. Ver. 10. Comp. chap. 8. 1, 3. Others appear to have had some lighter punishment inflicted on them. Ver. 11. When many fled away to other cities he had pursued them, and the eventful journey to Damascus was probably only one of those he had undertaken on this errand.

Why all this? He had "thought" that he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." He was acting in accordance with a purpose.

Suddenly there was a halt and a turn. Not one step more would Saul of Tarsus ever travel on the old road. In one short moment his face was, for life and death, set in the other direction. He was henceforth to be the servant and the witness of that Jesus whose name and whose cause he had so long opposed with bitter hatred. The consideration of the new road in which his feet were set hardly comes within the scope of this lesson. We have now to notice the harmony which his life presented in spite of the strange contrast between the two parts of it—the purpose underlying the sudden transition from the one to the other.

There was one hope which Paul had cherished all his life, in the early days when he was a persecutor, and in the days of suffering and of imprisonment. It was "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers," a hope which he had with his nation (ver. 7) in common; the hope which runs through the whole of the Old Testament, from the promise given in Eden to the predictions of Malachi the prophet. Agrippa must have well known what this meant, for it had spread even beyond the Jewish nation, and many among the Gentiles were looking for a great king to arise, a deliverer, a just ruler, in whom all might find blessing. Every Jew lived in the hope of Messiah's coming, and to that coming all the prayers and religious services of the nation were directed. To Paul, who had been even more zealous than the rest of his countrymen, the worship of the crucified Nazarene seemed a departure from the faith and hope of his fathers. He felt bound to oppose it with all his might. Then suddenly the risen Jesus appeared to him, and he found out his mistake; this Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the hope was no longer far distant, the promise was fulfilled, the kingdom begun. Was it any wonder that he turned right round in his course, and henceforth preached "the faith which once he destroyed?"

Paul had thus shown the reasonableness of the sudden and complete change in his life; of his devotion to the cause of the Lord Jesus. And this may suggest to us the reasonableness of a change from the way of the world, of self, and of sin, to the way of Christ. We need not credit all our young people with the lofty aspirations of Paul. But at least some will tell us they want to be successful, to be useful, to do the best they can for themselves, to be happy. And when we ask them to turn to Christ, to take him for their Saviour, to enter his service, we are pointing out how their wishes may be fulfilled. It is the Christian, the man or woman, boy or girl, who is devoted to Christ, who is successful and happy. I have heard how a French officer was derided for becoming a Protestant—changing his religion, as his comrades said. He answered, "I have done like my cousin Bernadotte. He became a Protestant to gain a crown in Sweden; I have become a Protestant to gain a crown in heaven." Was not his action in the highest degree reasonable?

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

This lesson may be presented under three topics: **1. The Audience.** Who they were (Festus, Agrippa, Bernice, courtiers, soldiers, and perhaps Luke and some friends of Paul), why they were there, the surroundings, etc. **2. The Preacher.** A word-picture of the prisoner brought in chained to a soldier, his circumstances, appearance, character, example in this lesson. **3. The Sermon.** Its theme, *Newness of Life:* 1.) The old life; 2.) The conversion; 3.) The new life. ....Another outline, adapted to adult classes, may be found in the Analytical and Biblical Outline....See a line of teaching in THE STUDY on this lesson, having for its subject *God's Call:* 1.) The man called; 2.) Circumstances of the call; 3.) Purposes of the call, etc....Notice especially the practical summing up of the aims of the Gospel in verse 18: 1.) To give light; 2.) To give liberty; 3.) To give pardon; 4.) To give holiness; 5.) To give inheritance; and the sole condition—*faith in Christ.*

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 1: The hand stretched forth, 854. Ver. 5: The Pharisees, 693. Ver. 6: Position of the accused, 722. Ver. 14: Goads, 225.

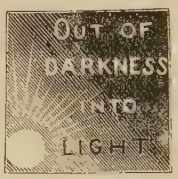
Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Living Jesus.*

A blackboard exercise on names and places may excite interest, and help in introducing this lesson. Print capitals on the board, P. C. F. J. A., and bring out all the facts you can about the persons, Paul, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa; also about the places, Cesarea and Jerusalem. Tell that Paul had been kept in prison two years by Felix. Now Festus had come to take the place of Felix, and again Paul's enemies, the Jews, began to make complaints, hoping that the new governor would send Paul to Jerusalem for trial, and that they might murder him on the way. Describe the scene—Paul chained to a soldier, before Agrippa and Bernice, Festus the governor, magistrates, and military officers, and the principal inhabitants of the city. Tell that Paul was not on trial now: he had asked to be sent to Rome to be judged by Cæsar, which he had a right to do as a Roman citizen. He was asked to give an account of the Christian faith before these people. The lesson naturally divides itself into two parts which may be termed Darkness and Light.

DARKNESS.



Tell that Paul was now about fifty-eight years old. He had not always known and loved Jesus. His heart had been dark for many years of his life. How do we know? We can tell by the way he acted. He hated and persecuted people who did not think as he did. He loved his own way, and did not love all men because they were God's children. Teach that hate, self-love, lack of love for others, all show that the heart is dark. Sin causes darkness. Where sin is, there is Satan. Paul then was in Satan's kingdom, and so are all whose hearts are like Paul's—selfish, unloving, unkind.

LIGHT.

But there is another kingdom. Make sun's rays penetrating the darkness on the board. The light from heaven shone into Paul's heart. Light scatters darkness. Read from the Bible, "I am the light of the world." Jesus came to Paul. Tell simply the story of his appearing. All the pride and self-love and hate in Paul's heart went away. It will be so in our hearts when Jesus shines upon them. Tell that Jesus spoke to Paul. Then he is alive. He says he is "alive for evermore." Paul was now a "witness" for Jesus. A witness tells what he has seen and heard. A child can be a witness. Ask Jesus to speak to you and tell others about it. Let his light drive away your darkness, and tell others of that.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ

BLACKBOARD QUESTIONS. What was Paul's heavenly vision? (Verses 13–18.) His mission was declared unto him. What was it? *To carry light to the Gentiles.* What is my mission? *To send the Gospel light to dark places.* What is this light? *A torch of truth.* What is my duty? (Verse 18.) How can I perform it? *Witness for Christ, work for Christ, live for Christ, give for Christ.* WHO WILL DO THIS?

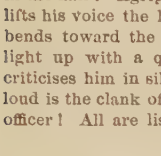
Lesson Word-Pictures.

A high day in Cesarea, a day of ostentation and pomp. Cesarea has been excitedly shouting for Agrippa. He has entered the hall, where he will meet a great

embassador in bonds, a representative of a court grander than Rome's but held to-day in chains. At his side walks the elegant, queenly Bernice. They take their seats. Near them is Festus, the Roman governor. Grave citizens of Cesarea are there. Gray-bearded officers of Rome have come also. And now all faces turn curiously toward a door where the sound of steps is heard. "It is he!" they whisper. Yes, the great embassador watched by his guard! Ah, it is that dear, faithful old apostle, Paul, and he will say a word for his Master, the King, this day. But, hush! All silent in the hall! Agrippa signals to Paul to begin. As he lifts his voice the hall is still. Agrippa patronizingly bends toward the speaker. Bernice's beautiful eyes light up with a quickened interest. Festus coldly criticises him in silence. Still, still is the room. How loud is the clank of that weapon dropped by a bungling officer! All are listening. Paul is telling of his boyhood. He is telling of his Pharisaic training. How his countenance glows as he tells of the nation's Messianic hope! Somebody raised from the dead? Festus's lip curls in scorn. Jesus of Nazareth? Agrippa frowns. Bernice smiles incredulously. Does she say, "Poor fanatic?" He is telling now of his journey to Damascus. An awe is in his face and a hush in his voice as he tells of the sharp, mysterious light from heaven, of their helpless prostration upon the ground, of the strange, solemn voice calling, "Saul, Saul!" And then he spreads before that assembly his high, august commission as embassador to the Gentiles. In conscious dignity, his voice swells, and all his soul is afire with consecration. What wonder as men look at him if under the rough garb, soiled by imprisonment, they see the bejeweled robes of one who comes as envoy from the City of all Precious Stones, a messenger from the Highest!

A. D. 60.] **LESSON XII. PAUL VINDICATED.** [**March 22.**

Acts 26. 19-32. [*Commit to memory verses* 22, 23.]



19 Whereupon, O king A-grip'pa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

20 But showed first unto them of Da-mas'cus, and at Je-ru'sa-lem, and throughout all the coasts of Ju-de'a, and *then* to the Gen'tiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Mo'ses did say should come:

23 That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and unto the Gen'tiles.

24 And as he thus spake for himself, Fes'tus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Fes'tus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King A-grip'pa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 Then A-grip'pa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Ber-ni'ce, and they that sat with them:

31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32 Then said A-grip'pa unto Fes'tus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæ'sar.

General Statement.

We are still the unseen spectators of the picture presented in our last lesson: the judgment-hall in Cesarea, with arched walls and stone floor; its thrones occupied by Festus the procurator, Agrippa the king, and his sister Bernice. Around them are courtiers, retainers, and guards, and in the midst, with one hand free from his chain, stands one who is the center of all eyes —Paul the prisoner. He has told the simple story of his life, and of his call to the work of winning the world to his Master, and he is now proceeding with an appeal to those before him to believe not only in the prophets, but in their Saviour, when he is interrupted by a sentence, kindly meant, though somewhat contemptuous, from the Roman governor, to whom all this discourse about heavenly visions and heavenly voices is a mystery. Paul answers him that he is not the victim of insane dreams, but speaks forth the utterance of thoughtfulness and truth, and then turns to the king with an impressive question. He is answered in a sentence intended to be vague and complimentary, with a slight shade of scorn, yet under all its politeness revealing a heart touched for the moment by the power of the truth. Then, as if to hide the momentary emotion, King Agrippa breaks up the court; the magnates retire, and the assembly is dispersed, to meet no more until that judgment when king and commoner, prisoner and prince, shall stand equal before God.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 19. O king Agrippa. See notes on Lesson XI, ver. 1. **I was not disobedient.** Great as was the revelation, it was requisite that Paul should accept the commission which it brought to him. (1) *Man's free will is a necessary link in the chain of God's purpose.* **The heavenly vision.** He had seen the Lord and heard his voice, but that privilege did not make him a believer. Only by his own choice could Saul become a disciple and an apostle.

20. First unto them of Damascus. His active ministry began at Damascus, after two years or more spent probably in that part of Arabia bordering on Syria. **At Jerusalem.** Escaping from Damascus by being let down over the wall in a basket, he went to Jerusalem, where he had not been seen for three years. His ministry there, of only a fortnight, was yet long enough to excite the anger of the Jews and the fear of the disciples. **Coasts of Judea.** There is no mention of a distinct ministry of Paul throughout Judea, though his visits to Ptolemais, Tyre, Cesarea, and Samaria are referred to. **And then.** The word *then* is not in the original. This is not intended to give a chronological, so much as a logical, account of Paul's labors, which were every-where first among the Jews, and then among the Gentiles. **To the Gentiles.** It was Paul's preaching to the Gentiles, to whom he felt a peculiar call, that cost him the loss of his popularity among the Jews. **That they should repent.** In these three sentences Paul states the practical rather than the doctrinal side of his teaching. Repentance in the Bible means more than sorrow for sin, however sincere and deep. Its vital meaning is a purpose of the will to renounce sin. **Turn to God.** This is more than reformation of conduct; it is the earnest seeking of the soul after God, in supplication for forgiveness. **Do works meet.** That is, the outward life must be in accordance with the inward purpose to live for God. (2) *A true Gospel experience involves a change of conduct as well as of opinions and feelings.*

21. For these causes. Because he believed and taught that Gentiles might be saved on the same terms as Jews, thus obliterating the distinction between them. **Caught me.** Literally, as in Rev. Ver., "seized me." **In the temple.** See Lesson VI and notes. Paul was worshiping in the temple when the Jews seized him, and were about to murder him, when he was taken from them by the Romans. **Went about.** Rather, *assayed*, or *undertook*.

22. Help of God. The word translated *help* means the succor or relief which comes to an army in battle. (3) *In the Christian's warfare, he has an almighty ally.* **I continue unto this day.** He stood undeterred by enemies and undisturbed by dangers. **Witnessing.** The great business of the preacher is to bear witness to the fact of salvation through Christ and his own experience of it. **To small and great.** On one hand to the slaves who constituted a large part of the Christian congregation, and on the other, to dignitaries like Festus and Agrippa. **Saying none other things.** To Agrippa, himself a Jew, Paul declared that the Gospel as preached by him was in the direct line of Old Testament teaching, and not contradictory to it. **The prophets and Moses.** The two great divisions of the Old Testament. Most of the historical books were called "former prophets," the prophetical, "latter prophets." (4) *There is complete accord between the Old and New Testaments.*

23. That Christ. He did not say, "that Christ should come," for this was the firm belief of every Jew. **Should suffer.** Such predictions are recorded in the Psalms, Isaiah, Daniel, and Zechariah. **The first that should rise.** The Rev. Ver. reads more correctly, "that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light." He was not the first who was raised from death, but the first who by his resurrection gave the promise of eternal life. If Christ had not risen we would never have heard of the Gospel. **Should show light.** In the darkness of sin and death light comes to man through the risen Christ alone. **The people.** Here and elsewhere the current term by which the Jews referred to their race, which was "*the* people" in their eyes. **To the Gentiles.** Notice how, to an enlightened Jew, as Agrippa was, Paul proclaimed the broader truths of the Gospel for all men.

24. Festus. See notes, Lesson X, verse 27. **Said with a loud voice.** He interrupted the prisoner's address, not jestingly, but in the feeling thoroughly natural to a Roman, who was an utter disbeliever in all religion and any hereafter, and who had absolutely no knowledge of the doctrinal subjects of which Paul was speaking. **Thou art beside thyself.** "You are insane, Paul," is the literal translation. "Many writings have turned you to insanity." The reference to "Moses and the prophets" suggested to him that Paul was an enthusiast, or in the language of to-day, "a crank," who by constant poring over old manuscripts had lost his reason. (5) *To the man of the world the earnest Christian appears a fanatic.*

25. But he said. The calm, respectful answer showed that Paul was possessed of a clear and well-balanced mind. (6) *No matter how addressed, the Christian should be courteous.* **Most noble Festus.** He does not forget to give the procurator his appropriate style of address. **Truth and soberness.** The latter word means "thoughtfulness," or that which is the opposite of insanity. "The words were true, and the manner of presenting them was sober and thoughtful."—*Besser.*

26. The king knoweth. Agrippa as a Jew was acquainted with Scripture, and as a ruler in Palestine had become conversant with the facts upon which the Gospel was founded, so that he would comprehend much that was a mystery to Festus. **None of these things are hidden.** The events of Christ's life, and the history of the Christian Church, which were known to all the leading Jews, and could not be contradicted. **Not done in a corner.** The wide knowledge of the facts connected with the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, thus appealed to by one who lived in their era, is a strong evidence for the Gospel.

27. King Agrippa. He now turns from his discourse to fix its direct application upon his royal hearer, a bold and striking culmination of his address. **Believest thou the prophets?** He who believes heartily the Old Testament cannot reject the New, as Paul would have shown if he had not been interrupted. **I know that thou believest.** "A masterly oratorical answer to his own question. Agrippa had refused both his sisters to royal suitors until the kings had consented to be circumcised."—*Whedon.*

28. Then Agrippa said. Taking into view Agrippa's condition, as a worldly-minded, pleasure-loving Sadducee, and his use of the word "Christian," at that time a term of contempt, we conclude that his words were a blending of compliment to Paul's skill as a reasoner, with scorn of the cause which he represented, and perhaps an unconscious undertone of conviction, such as many unbelievers feel when they hear the Gospel. **Almost thou persuadest.** Among the many proposed renderings, we find none better than that of the Revised Version: "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian," somewhat evasive as well as derisive. **A Christian.** This word is used only thrice in the New Testament: in Acts 11. 26, here, and in 1 Pet. 4. 16. In every instance it is a name given *to* disciples, and not used *by* them, though the last reference indicates that it was slowly becoming accepted by believers, and a generation later it was their current name. (7) *The hardest foes to meet are those who conceal their feelings under a sneer.*

29. And Paul said. Lifting his fettered hand, which gave a pathetic emphasis to his eloquent answer. **I would to God.** Paul, with ready power, caught up the half-sarcastic expression, and turned it upon the speaker with a deep, serious meaning. **Not only thou, but also all.** A brilliant assembly of notable men and women were listening, in various degrees of interest, and Paul's large heart took them all into its aspirations. **Almost and altogether.** Rev. Ver., "with little or with much." The word *effort* or *persuasion* should be supplied with this revision. Paul's only thought was of his hearers' salvation. **Such as I am.** There was a wide apparent difference between the princes and the prisoner; but a wider real difference between the heir of salvation and the slaves of sin. (8) *No one except the Christian can have as his highest wish for others that they may be what he is.* **Except these bonds.** Another instance of the perfect self-command and courtesy of the apostle. He wishes them to enjoy the fellowship of his liberty, but not of his chain: all his joys, but none of his sorrows.

30. The king rose up. There was no way to escape the direct application of Paul's speech, without acknowledgments which would be uncomfortable in the presence of Gentiles; so Agrippa abruptly arose and led the way to the breaking up of the assembly. **The governor.** The definite statement of order in the departure, points to an eye-witness of the scene. **Bernice.** This was the sister of Agrippa, and believed by ancient writers to have lived in a still more intimate relation with him. Her life was as infamous as her person was beautiful.

31. They were gone aside. The entire company of princes and nobles united in the conference, and also in its verdict. **This man doeth nothing.** To us, it is immaterial what may have been the opinions of that company, but when Luke wrote, it was a matter of interest and of value to know that they, people of high rank who had listened to his defense, pronounced him innocent.

32. Then said Agrippa. It is uncertain whether he spoke as a Jew, or as a judge. In the former case, his answer would imply that a Jew might become a Christian without renouncing his national faith; in the latter, that the Roman law took no cognizance of special creed or religion. **Might have been set at liberty.** If he had been liberated he would probably have lost his life through the plots of the Jews, and might never have seen Rome. His appeal and this address probably added several years to his life, and gave to the Church the four precious epistles of his captivity. **Had not appealed unto Cæsar.** None but a Roman citizen could make this appeal, but when made, his case was removed at once to the emperor's court at Rome. So Festus could neither liberate nor condemn Paul, but must send him to Rome.

HOME READINGS.

M. Paul vindicated. Acts 26. 19–32.
Tu. Repentance and works. Matt. 3. 1–12.
W. Prophecy explained. Luke 24. 27–44.
Th. The great Prophet promised. Deut. 18. 15–22.
F. Wisdom considered madness. John 10. 1–21.
S. The source of help. Psa. 46. 1–11.
S. The everlasting light. Isa. 60. 1–22

GOLDEN TEXT.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day. Acts 26. 22.

LESSON HYMN. S. M.

Hymnal, No. 436.

Here I can firmly rest ;
I dare to boast of this,
That God, the highest and the best,
My Friend and Father is.

Naught have I of my own,
Naught in the life I lead ;
What Christ hath given, that alone
I dare in faith to plead.

I rest upon the ground
Of Jesus and his blood ;
It is through him that I have found
My soul's eternal good.

TIME.—A. D. 60, immediately following the last lesson.

PLACE.—Cesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine.

RULERS.—See Lesson XI.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The fulfillment of prophecy.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Paul and his Work, v. 19–23.
How did Paul treat the heavenly vision ?
How did he obey it ?
What were the consequences to him ?
How was he able to remain steadfast ?
What was the burden of Paul's preaching ?

2. Paul and Festus, v. 24–26.
By whom was Paul interrupted ?
What charge did Festus make ?
What did he say had crazed the apostle ?
How did Paul reply ?
What did he say to Agrippa ?

3. Paul and Agrippa, v. 27–32.
What question did he ask the king ?
How did Agrippa reply ?
What was Paul's response ?
What did the royal party then do ?
What was the result of their consultation ?

Practical Teachings.

How does this lesson show—

1. The loyalty of Paul ?
2. The wisdom of Paul ?
3. Paul's advantage over his enemies ?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Paul and his Work, v. 19–23.
What effect had the vision upon Paul ?
Where did he first publicly confess Christ ?
Whither did his labors lead him ?
What was his message ?
Who hindered his work ?
What did they seek to do ?
What work did Paul still do ?
What doctrine did he teach ?

2. Paul and Festus, v. 24–26.
Who interrupted Paul's defense ?
What charge did he bring ?
What was Paul's reply ?
To whom did he appeal ?
What reason did he urge ?

3. Paul and Agrippa, v. 27–32.
What question did Paul ask of King Agrippa ?
What was the king's answer ?
What was Paul's prayer for Agrippa
Whom besides did he include ?
What was done at the close of his address ?
What was the verdict of the court ?
Why was Paul kept a prisoner ?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. Obedience to the call of duty ?
2. Boldness in a good cause ?
3. Need of a complete surrender to Christ ?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Before whom was Paul speaking besides King Agrippa ? **Festus, the governor, who, you remember, followed Felix.**

What did he tell the king he had done since his call to be an apostle of Christ ? **Preached the Gospel to all classes of people, beginning at Damascus.**

After that where did he go ? **To Jerusalem and Judea, and then to the Gentiles.**

For preaching only such words as Moses and the prophets said should come, what had the Jews done ? **Seized him in the temple and tried to kill him.**

As he continued to explain *very carefully just what* doctrines he had preached, what did Festus say ? **With a loud voice: "Paul, you are beside yourself; so much study has made you mad."**

What respectful, modest reply did Paul make ? **I am not mad, most noble Festus ; the words I speak are true and sober.**

Then, turning to the king, what did Paul say ? **The king knows these things are true.**

How did the king know them to be true ? **They had been done in the light, and he had seen, heard, and read about them.**

What did Agrippa tell Paul ? **"Why, you almost persuade me to be a Christian."**

What did Paul say he earnestly desired ? **That all who heard him were real Christians as he was, except his chains.**

When Paul held up his chains, what did the company do ? **Rose and left the room.**

Why do you think they left so suddenly ?

As soon as they were alone, what did they say ? **He is an innocent man, he ought not to be in prison.**

What did King Agrippa say to Festus the governor ? **He might be set free, if he had not asked to be tried before the emperor.**

Words with Little People.

Do you remember the promise of "*help*" you had in the first two lessons this year ? If you study to-day's GOLDEN TEXT you will see that Paul *obtained* this help, that is, he believed God *could* help him, he believed he was *willing* to help him, and *he asked God to do it*, and God made him strong to preach and endure much suffering. It is not *enough*, dear children, to *have* the *promise*. *You must ask God to give* you what he has promised. "Ask, and you shall receive." May God *help* you to be *strong* little Christians !

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. In obeying the vision, what did Paul show to the people and to the Gentiles ? **"That they should repent and turn to God."**

2. How was Paul strengthened in his work ? **He obtained help of God.**

3. What did Agrippa say to Paul ? **"Almost thou persuadest me."**

4. What would Paul have had ? **That he were fully persuaded.**

5. What was the judgment concerning Paul ? **He was declared innocent of offense.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Proclaiming the Gospel.

I. THE PREACHER.

1. **Divinely aided.** "*Help of God.*" v. 22.
"Without me ye can do nothing." John 15. 5.
"God....worketh in you." Phil. 2. 13.

2. **Addressing all men.** "*Small and great.*" v. 22.
"The promise is....to all." Acts 2. 39.
"Preach....to every creature." Mark 16. 15
3. **Appealing to Scripture.** "*Prophets and Moses.*" v. 22.
"That all....must be fulfilled." Luke 24. 44.
"Believed Moses....believed me." John 5. 46.

II. The Message.

1. **A suffering Saviour.** "*Christ should suffer.*" v. 23.
"Once suffered for sins." 1 Pet. 3. 18.
"It behooved Christ to suffer." Luke 24. 26.
2. **A risen Saviour.** "*Rise from the dead.*" v. 23.
"Now is Christ risen from the dead." 1 Cor. 15. 20.
"The first-born from the dead." Col. 1. 18.
3. **A universal Saviour.** "*To the Gentiles.*" v. 23.
"Taste death for every man." Heb. 2. 9.
"To enlighten the Gentiles." Luke 2. 32.

III. The Aim.

1. **Repentance from sin.** "*They should repent.*" v. 20.
"Preached that men should repent." Mark 6. 12.
"Peter said, Repent....every one of you." Acts 2. 38.
2. **Turning to God.** "*Turn to God.*" v. 20.
"Rend your heart....turn unto the Lord." Joel 2. 13.
"Say....Take away all iniquity." Hos. 14. 2.
3. **Newness of life.** "*Meet for repentance.*" v. 20.
"Bring forth....fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3. 8.
"Cease....evil; learn to do well." Isa. 1. 16, 17.

IV. The Hearers.

1. **Opposers.** "*Went about to kill me.*" v. 21.
"Enemies of the cross of Christ." Phil. 3. 18.
"Marvel not....world hate you." 1 John 3. 13.
2. **Scoffers.** "*Beside thyself.*" v. 24.
"To them that perish foolishness." 1 Cor. 1. 18.
"Hid to them that are lost." 1 Cor. 4. 3.
3. **Undecided.** "*Almost....persuaded.*" v. 28.
"How long halt ye....two opinions?" 1 Kings 18. 21.
"Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6. 24.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Example of Paul.

In this lesson notice Paul as an example—

1. In prompt obedience to God's call. v. 19.

2. In earnest, persevering work for God's cause. v. 20.

3. In full reliance on God's help. v. 22.

4. In proclaiming Christ to all men. v. 22.

5. In standing upon and appealing to the Scriptures. v. 22.

6. In holding up the cross of Christ. v. 23.

7. In courteous, kind bearing, even when insulted. v. 25, 29.

English Teacher's Notes.

The life of a soldier in active service presents a great contrast to that of a laborer at home. In the latter life there is a certain degree of regularity, safety, and peace, while the former is full of uncertainty and suspense, of hardship and danger, of sudden surprises and startling changes. Yet often has a simple country lad, too raw and ignorant to be impelled by any particular patriotism or heroism, given up his quiet home and work and joined the army, to march to battle, and, it may be, death. One would think that some very powerful and persistent influence must have been at work to induce him to make such a change. And yet often it has been nothing more than a shilling and a few fair words from the recruiting sergeant! With a very little persuasion the youth has altered the whole course of his life, and taken upon himself grave duties and obligations of which he knows next to nothing. The thing seems surprising, especially when we remember how hard it sometimes is to persuade a person to take a step which is decidedly to his benefit. But there are cases in which the very slightest persuasion is generally enough. A prisoner does not need much persuasion to go out free when the time of release comes. A poor man does not need much persuasion to sign his name to a document which makes him master of a fortune. A drowning man needs but little persuasion to lay hold of the rope thrown to save him.

Some such illustrations as these may help to make plain the meaning of the words which, though not this time chosen as the Golden Text, certainly form the most prominent and striking point in the lesson for to-day: "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian" (Revised Version). It was the fourth time since his seizure and imprisonment that Paul had been called upon to defend himself. (I do not include the speech from the castle steps, as that was made by his own desire and request.) His first defense had been made before the council, where he had had a prejudiced and fanatical audience, and where his speech was interrupted. The second had been made before Felix, the third before Festus, and these officials of the Roman empire were alike indifferent to the real question at issue, while the latter was profoundly ignorant concerning the matter. In Agrippa Paul had a hearer of a different kind. The character of the king was not more free from blame than that of Felix or Festus, but he was "expert in all questions among the Jews" and had a good acquaintance with, and respect for, the writings of the prophets. Here was something to work upon. If Paul had striven in his private interview for the spiritual good of Felix, he could not, though in a public audience, leave out of sight that of Agrippa. For Paul was, if we may so speak, a recruiting sergeant, seeking to induce men to change their course, to enlist in the service of the king whom he served, and to enter on the new life (see last lesson) which he was himself leading. And so in his speech before the king we have a clear declaration of the Gospel message, given in verses 18, 20, 23.

This message proposed an entire change in the life of the person who received it—the turning off from the old road and entering upon a new one. Paul delivered it in a few earnest, burning words. And Agrippa, although he sat as a judge to hear the prisoner, felt that the prisoner was aiming at him, "Thou wouldest make me a Christian" was his half-astonished, half-sarcastic remark. What was there to incline him to such a change?

See what Paul had set before him: sight instead of blindness, light instead of darkness, freedom instead of slavery, forgiveness instead of condemnation, and an inheritance of glory which should never pass away. Agrippa wore, indeed, a crown already; he was rich and prosperous, and enjoyed high favor with the Roman emperor. But how long would he call these things his own? And his life was stained with crime, and he himself in bondage to his passions, a poor man, and a slave, though a king! The man who stood before him with the chain on his wrist was far better off: he was free, though fettered, and his inheritance was for eternity. He could but long for all about him to pass through the same change, and enjoy the same new life as himself.

Should such a change have needed much persuasion? Yet Agrippa scorned the proposal. These few words should not induce him to turn. He would not give up his poverty, his slavery, his darkness.

Yet he had not heard without conceiving a certain respect for Paul. All the latter's judges (in spite of the mocking remark of Festus) came to the same conclusion about him: "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds;" "This man might have been set at liberty." Yet for themselves they refused "the liberty of the children of God."

As far as we know, this was the only opportunity set before Agrippa. The boys and girls around us have numbers of these opportunities. To a faithful minister or teacher they cannot say: "With a little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian," for they have persuasion, warning, entreaty, over and over again. Perhaps the faithful teacher is much respected. Right enough—but what will this avail the careless scholar who slights the much persuasion, and throws away his opportunities?

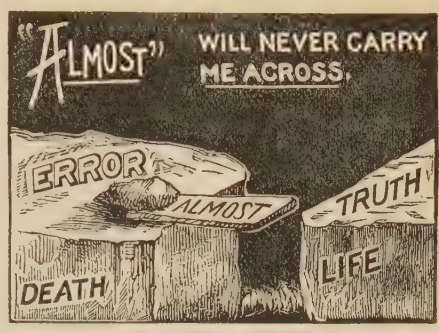
Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Place before the class the scene of the lesson: court room, judges, spectators, apostle....In teaching the lesson to older scholars, use the Analytical and Biblical Outline, with the subject, "Proclaiming the Gospel." I. The preacher—what the lesson shows us concerning Paul as a preacher. II. The message—Christ as dying, risen, universal Saviour. III. The practical aim for which Paul was preaching, (ver. 20)—the repentance, turning to God, and renewal of life on the part of those to whom he preached the truth. IV. The results which followed Paul's preaching. Take each of his hearers as a type: The Jews (ver. 21) as types of open opposers of the Gospel; Festus as representing a certain class of mind which looks with lofty contempt on the Gospel as folly, and its believers as fanatics; Agrippa as representing the undecided; for though the old view that he was "almost persuaded" cannot be maintained, yet his remark shows an undercurrent of conviction which he was striving to resist....For younger scholars take as subject, Paul's example in this lesson, as shown in "Thoughts for Young People."....ILLUSTRATION. (See SUNDAY-SCHOOL JOURNAL, November, 1877, page 258, in English Teacher's Notes.) An eagle on an open perch in Zoological Garden, spreads wings, rises a few feet, then drops on his perch. He is held back from liberty by his chain. So Agrippa was chained by worldly pleasure, Festus by prejudice and ignorance of the Gospel, and Paul alone was free.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



DESCRIPTION. Error is separated from truth by a mighty chasm. On one side is death, on the other is life. Every one expects at some time to leave error and cross over to the height of divine truth. They hear truth proclaimed, as Paul told it to King Agrippa, and like the king they are *almost persuaded*. Almost will never carry one across. It is the way of *fully* persuaded that leads to life. "Almost" reaches nearly there, but never far enough. It is held down by a great stone of worldly desire. Do not stay on the side of error.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

O that marvelous "heavenly vision!" Those heavens parting like golden doors; that down-flashing dazzling light; those mute, prostrate forms; that solemn, rebuking voice—does not Paul see and hear all this as he proves before Agrippa and his companions the wonderful embassy to which heaven's courts had appointed him? The light of that heavenly vision is in his eyes, its mystery is in his voice, its dignity is in his attitude, and its loving significance to Jew and Gentile profoundly stirs his soul. How can he be disobedient to his solemn call? He faces Agrippa. He appeals to him. He unrolls the proofs of his fidelity. He exalts his King, that suffering, now exalted Christ. Agrippa listens attentively. Bernice gives the speaker her eyes, her ears. And Festus, does he sneer? Does he say, "Superstition? Fanaticism?" Christ rise from the dead? Did Paul assert that? Festus turns away in derision. "Gone mad!" does he whisper that? Abruptly, rudely, stormily, he breaks forth, "Paul, thou art beside thyself! Much learning doth make thee mad." Mad! He appeals to Agrippa. He challenges Agrippa to confirm the truthfulness of his words. Was all this Messianic history shut into a little corner? Does not Agrippa believe the prophets? Yes, "thou believest," and the apostle's eyes search the depths of Agrippa's soul. What will the latter do? He writhes in his chair. The faces of all turn toward his royal, bewildered center. Bernice looks wonderingly. Festus eyes him with a curious smile. And Agrippa—he speaks: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" Ah, Agrippa, if thou only didst know it, heaven's doors have stood ajar this day so near thy soul! But the assembly breaks up. The embassador's plea is unpleasantly direct and personal. Two groups have withdrawn: Paul and his guard, Agrippa and the stately, elegant Bernice. Perhaps Festus stands and watches them—a prisoner here, a king and queen there; soiled robes here, rustling silks there; the despised fanatic and the honored sovereigns. Ah, Festus, into the prisoner's cell goes the light of the

"heavenly vision," God's credentials, but Agrippa's darkened couch is tenanted by a guilty conscience. Where was the royalty—in the king's chamber, or the prisoner's cell?

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Obedience the True Wisdom.*

Review the scene, the speaker, the audience, and the story told by the speaker. Ask how Paul's heart was changed—what changed it, in what way the new heart was different from the old. Teach that, 1.) The new heart is willing to obey; 2.) The new heart is willing to receive help; 3.) The new heart is willing to give help.

1. Read verses 19 and 20 of the lesson. Talk about obedience; tell what it is—the giving up our own will. Paul's will was to persecute the Christians; God's will was that Paul should love them. Make practical application. Whom are children asked to obey? Parents, teachers, any one in authority; but God, above all. Children obey God when they obey their parents. Teach that true obedience is always quick, like Paul's. Obedience does not wait to ask questions. Paul began right away, and for more than twenty years now he had gone on obeying the Lord. Was it always pleasant? No; the Jews tried to kill Paul because he obeyed God. Satan will try to get children not to obey, but God is stronger than Satan.

2. How many men swore an oath that they would kill Paul? How was he saved from these forty cruel men? Tell that God promises to help those who obey him, and Paul believed him. Paul was willing not only to obey, but also to have help. Paul was not as strong as forty men are. He was only one weak man. He needed help, and so do children. Tell of some of the temptations that lie in wait for children. When they do right they sometimes suffer for it. But always, when they have obeyed God, they have a right to get help from him. He says, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Little children may obtain help from God to resist evil, to obey at all times, to be little witnesses for Jesus, in the same way that Paul did—by asking and taking.

Tell how Festus spoke to Paul. Festus and Agrippa and Bernice were all wicked people. They listened to Paul as he spoke the words of truth to them, but they were not willing to obey, as Paul was. They loved themselves; Paul loved other folks—even the wicked ones—and was ready to help them. Ask what a fountain is like; it never tires of giving; so Paul's heart never tired of speaking about Jesus, and giving help to those who did not know him. Read verse 29. Print "Almost" on the board, and speak of the danger in that little word. Urge upon children to give the heart wholly to Jesus, not almost, and then to obey him as Paul did.

FIRST QUARTERLY REVIEW.

March 29.

HOME READINGS.

M. Lessons I, II. Acts 20. 2-27.
Tu. Lessons III, IV. Acts 20. 28-38; 21. 1-14.
W. Lessons V, VI. Acts 21. 15-40.
Th. Lessons VII, VIII. Acts 22. 1-21; 23. 1-11.
F. Lessons IX, X. Acts 23. 12-24; 24. 10-27.
S. Lessons XI, XII. Acts 26. 1-32.
S. The goodness of God. Psa. 23. 1-6.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

THE SYMBOLS · UNITED · ALL FOR CHRIST!

LESSON I.—What accident interrupted Paul's preaching? What was the outcome? How did the circumstances prove the truth of the promise, "All things work together for good?"

LESSON II.—What did Paul say of his past conduct as a minister of Jesus Christ, and of his resolution as to the future?

LESSON III.—Of what did Paul warn the Church? What did he say as to his own support? How does this lesson enforce the duty of benevolence?

LESSON IV.—Of what journey does this lesson speak? What prophecy concerning Paul did Agabus utter? How does this lesson teach that "Love is stronger than death?"

LESSON V.—To what city had Paul and his company come? What can you tell concerning the council held there? What do we learn respecting the true Christian desire to avoid offense?

LESSON VI.—Who created the temple disturbance? How was Paul treated? What spirit did he show?

LESSON VII.—To what does Paul allude in the first part of his address? What narrative does he relate? What duty was enjoined upon him?

LESSON VIII.—Before what council does Paul appear, and what was the result of the conference? How was Paul sustained?

LESSON IX.—Of what conspiracy does this lesson treat? What journey did Paul make? How easy for God to confound his enemies!

LESSON X.—Before whom was Paul charged with crime? What was his defense? See the advantages of a good conscience and the truth.

LESSON XI.—Why was Paul pleased to plead his case before Agrippa? What facts did he relate? The apostle's willingness to confess Jesus.

LESSON XII.—Recall the conversation between Paul and Festus; also that between Agrippa and Paul. The advantage of loyalty to God over royalty.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

LESSON I. **Paul at Troas.** Acts 20. 2-16.—Where did Paul stop on his way to Troas? What does the GOLDEN TEXT say he did on the Sabbath? How long did he preach? What accident happened? How was life restored?

LESSON II.—**Paul at Miletus.** Acts 20. 17-27.—Whom did Paul assemble at Miletus? Of what did he remind them? What had been the theme of his preaching? [GOLDEN TEXT.] How did he regard his sufferings?

LESSON III. **Paul's farewell.** Acts 20. 28-38.—What charge did Paul give the elders? [GOLDEN TEXT.] What did he foretell? What example did he leave them? How did the elders show their grief at parting?

LESSON IV. **Paul going to Jerusalem.** Acts 21. 1-14.—Where did Paul first stop? What city was his next tarrying place? With whom did he stay? What visitor did he receive? What warning did the prophet give? What was Paul's answer, as given in the GOLDEN TEXT?

LESSON V. **Paul at Jerusalem.** Acts 21. 15-26.—How was Paul received at Jerusalem? Of what did he make report to the elders? How was the report received? [GOLDEN TEXT.] What objection was made to Paul? What test was proposed?

LESSON VI. **Paul Assailed.** Acts 21. 27-40.—On whose complaint was Paul assailed? How was he rescued? To what place was he taken for refuge? What request did he make? What was his spirit, as given in the GOLDEN TEXT.

LESSON VII. **Paul's Defense.** Acts 22. 1-21.—In what language did Paul make his defense? What confession did he make? What experience did he recount? What charge had he received? What is the GOLDEN TEXT.

LESSON VIII. **Paul Before the Council.** Acts 23. 1-11.—Who was chief of the council that tried Paul?

Why did Paul rebuke him? What did he declare himself to be? What commotion followed? How was Paul strengthened in his trial? [GOLDEN TEXT.]

LESSON IX. **Paul Sent to Felix.** Acts 23. 12–24.—What conspiracy was formed against Paul? How was it revealed? Who defeated the plan? To what place was Paul sent? What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

LESSON X. **Paul Before Felix.** Acts 24. 10–27.—What doctrine did Paul declare? What was his especial desire? [GOLDEN TEXT.] What effect had Paul's preaching upon Felix? To what conclusion did Felix come?

LESSON XI. **Paul Before Agrippa.** Acts 26. 1–18.—What history did Paul relate to the king? What did he say of his former spirit? Whose presence had arrested him? [GOLDEN TEXT.] What great commission had been given him?

LESSON XII. **Paul Vindicated.** Acts 26. 19–29.—What was Paul's determination? [GOLDEN TEXT.] What was Festus's opinion of Paul? What was Paul's reply? What was King Agrippa's testimony? What was his final verdict?

REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

See if you can repeat the GOLDEN TEXTS for the quarter:

1. And upon—	**7. What shall—**
2. Repentance toward—	**8. And the night—**
3. Feed the—	**9. If any man—**
4. The will—	**10. A conscience—**
5. And when—	**11. Who art—**
6. I am—	**12. Having therefore—**

LESSON I.—Where do we find Paul in this lesson? **At Troas.** How long did they stay in the upper chamber? **Until daylight.** What happened? **A boy died, and was brought to life again.**

LESSON II.—For whom did Paul send? **The elders of the Church at Ephesus.** How did he feel when he thought of all he was to suffer? **Strong, because he had been faithful.**

LESSON III.—What warning did Paul give? **Beware of false teachers.** What would help them to be ready for them? **To be on the watch.** What sad thing happened? **Paul had to say farewell.**

LESSON IV.—Where did Paul stop on his way to Jerusalem. **At Tyre.** Where did he go from Tyre? **To Philip's house in Cesarea.** What did they try to do in both places? **Keep him from going to Jerusalem.**

LESSON V.—Whom did Paul meet in Jerusalem? **The elders of the Church.** What did he do to please them? **Went to the temple to fulfill the Jewish vow.**

LESSON VI.—What did the people do while Paul was in the temple? **Laid hands on him and dragged him out into the court.** As they were about to kill him, what did the chief captain do? **Had him bound and carried to the castle.** What did he ask leave to do? **Speak to the people.**

LESSON VII.—Whom did Paul say he was? **An educated Jew.** Of what did he speak to them? **His conversion.**

LESSON VIII.—Where did Paul next plead his cause? **Before the counsel.** What caused a great deal of trouble? **His talk about the resurrection of the dead.** Where was he carried for safety? **To the castle.**

LESSON IX.—What did the Jews swear to do? **Kill Paul.** Who heard of it and told the captain? **Paul's nephew.** What did the captain do? **Sent him away at night to Cesarea.**

LESSON X.—To whom did Paul tell the truth of the whole matter? **Felix the governor.** Of what did Paul preach to Felix and his wife? **The judgment.** What did Felix hope for? **Money to set him free.**

LESSON XI.—Before whom was Paul next brought? **King Agrippa.** What did he tell him? **Of his conversion and call to preach the Gospel.**

LESSON XII.—What did King Agrippa *think* as he heard Paul? **That he was beside himself.** How did he *feel?* **Almost persuaded to be a Christian.** What did he *say?* **"This man doeth nothing worthy of death."**

Symbol Review.

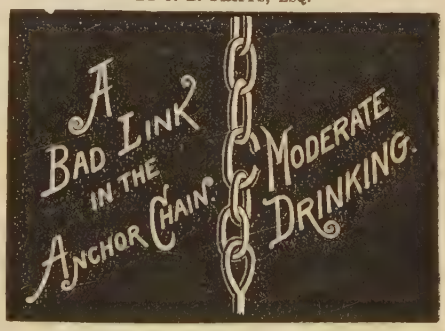
BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

Paul's Life after Conversion—"All for Christ."

EXPLANATION. The review sentence is "*All for Christ,*" having in it twelve letters, one for each lesson. The scholars may write this sentence, or it may be placed on the blackboard, and the letters numbered. Each letter locates a lesson. ILLUSTRATION. The teacher asks, *What was the subject of Lesson VII?* The scholar thinks, "The seventh letter is C—Conversion of Saul. In younger classes the teacher may show the symbols as here arranged for memory helps.

Temperance Blackboard Lesson.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Draw a chain running down the center of the board. Name the several links with good traits in the character of a man. Draw one link as if broken. Name it *moderate drinking.* There is the weak link in the chain that should anchor one in the harbor of safety. The gentle breeze of pleasure may turn to a gale of temptation that will part the chain at its weakest point.

LESSONS FOR APRIL, 1885.

APRIL 5. Paul's Voyage. Acts 27. 1, 2, 14–26.
APRIL 12. Paul's Shipwreck. Acts 27. 27–44.
APRIL 19. Paul Going to Rome. Acts 28. 1–15.
APRIL 26. Paul at Rome. Acts 28. 16–31.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON, M.D., D.D.

Lesson IX. March 1. Paul Sent to Felix. Acts 23. 12-24.

1. The easiest and also the true way of explaining this wicked and cowardly conspiracy against Paul, ver. 12. Jer. 17. 9; Isa. 29. 13, with Matt. 15. 8; 7. 21; 12. 35; Rom. 8. 7; Eccl. 9. 3; John 13. 2; Isa. 6. 10; Acts 28. 26, 27.

2. With what doctrinal error, and ecclesiastical irregularity, or impropriety, could Paul be charged by his enemies, the official Sadducees and Pharisees? Acts 26. 23; 17. 31; 1 Cor. 15. 12, 14, 17, 20, 22, 42–54; Acts 15; 1 Cor. 7. 18; Gal. 2. 2–5; 5. 6; 6. 15; Phil. 3. 3.

3. The Jewish Sanhedrin being the real, though disguised, persecutor of Paul, at this time, it would be well to keep in mind its iniquitous history. Matt. 26. 59; Mark 14. 55; 15. 1; Luke 22. 66, 67; John 11. 47, 48; 18. 31; Acts 4. 1–22; 7. 54–60.

4. A supreme governing body may be divinely instituted, as was the Sanhedrin, and afterward fall into iniquity in its administration, owing to the corrupt hearts of its members. Num. 11. 16–24; Matt. 5. 20; 16. 6; 23; Luke 11. 39; 12. 1; Matt. 22. 23–32; Acts 23. 8; Psa. 95. 10.

5. Other pledges and conspiracies equally definite, rash, and unavailing, recorded in: 1 Sam. 14. 24; Num. 16; 26. 9; 2 Sam. 15–17; Esth. 2. 21; 1 King 1. 5; Matt. 26. 3, 4; Psa. 2. 2–5; Mark 14. 1; Acts 4. 27.

6. How hopeless and unintelligent the attempt made by the enemies of Christ in this lesson, and repeated by certain unholy and stupid souls to-day, to destroy Christianity by deceit, ridicule, argument, or physical force, when the God of heaven has said: 1 John 3. 8; Isa. 42. 4; 45. 23; 1 Cor. 15. 25; Psa. 98. 1; Luke 2. 14; Heb. 2. 14; Phil. 2. 10; 1 Chron. 29. 11; Rev. 5. 13; 1 Tim. 6. 14–16; 1 Pet. 4. 11.

7. Paul's faith in God, and in his specific promises, must have been inestimably valuable to him in this hour of peril, ver. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 13; 2 Cor. 1. 24; Col. 1. 23; 2 Tim. 1. 12; 4. 7; 1 Tim. 4. 8; Acts 23. 11; Rom. 8. 32; Phil. 1. 12; Heb. 12. 6.

8. Who were the chief priests and elders, and what were their legitimate duties, ver. 14. Deut. 17. 8–12; 19. 17; 21. 5; 33. 8, 10; 1 Chron. 23. 13; Lev. 21. 10–12; Exod. 24. 1, 9; Num. 11. 16; Psa. 107. 32.

9. The real purity and greatness of Paul, as well as the sublimity of his missionary heroism, may account for the courteous treatment he received, on so many occasions, from the Roman officers, ver. 23. Rom. 1. 14–16; Acts 16. 37; 24. 23; 27. 3; 28. 16; 26. 2, 3; Rom. 15. 1, 2; 14. 7. 8.

10. The positive knowledge that as God's children in the way of duty we are absolutely safe, should not prevent us from doing all in our power to guard ourselves, ver. 17. Acts 27. 22, 31, 32; 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9; Prov. 16. 9; 19. 21; 20. 24; 21. 1; Exod. 15. 9–11; 2 Sam. 17. 14, 15.

The lesson teaches:

1. Some of the worst of human conclusions have been reached in the name of religion, and in obeying high ecclesiastical leadership, ver. 12.

2. It is not improbable that these cruel and cowardly conspirators were hired to do this murderous deed by an ecclesiastical tyranny that feared Paul's teachings, ver. 14.

3. Men ready to murder find it easy to lie to those for whom the murder is to be committed, ver. 15.

4. When it is best, how naturally and easily the Lord can deliver an imperiled saint, ver. 16.

5. Paul had a personal part to accomplish in God's plan of coming for him, ver. 17.

6. The divine instrumentalities of protecting providence always harmonize, ver. 18.

7. God usually, but not always, addresses man through his written word, ver. 21.

8. Ungodly men, sometimes, under a providential inspiration, reveal the will of God, ver. 22.

9. God's will here took the form of official Roman tenderness, ver. 23.

10. God, let it not be forgotten, cared for Paul's body until his work was done.

Lesson X. March 8. Paul Before Felix. Acts 24. 10-27.

1. Paul was accused before Felix of being a corrupt character, an instigator of treason in the State, heresy in the Church, and a desecrator of God's house. To prove all was this evidence: Acts 19. 2, 6; 13. 10; 21. 26; 1 Cor. 2. 2; 3. 16, 17; Matt. 22. 21; Deut. 10. 16; 30. 6; Jer. 4. 4; Rom. 2. 28, 29; Phil. 3. 3.

2. Paul in conscious personal, political, and ecclesiastical innocence, and resting in the positive promise of his Lord, was ready to speak in any presence when bidden, ver. 10. Matt. 10. 18, 19; Mark 13. 11; Luke 12. 11, 12; 21. 14, 15; Acts 6. 10; 26. 1; Psa. 119. 46; 1 Pet. 3. 15.

3. "There is nothing easier than lying," especially when it can be made to judicially convict one whose death is sought through bigotry, jealousy, or fear. Acts 6. 11; 1 Kings 21. 10, 13; Lev. 24. 16; Deut. 13. 13; Matt. 26. 59, 60; Psa. 27. 12; 35. 11; Exod. 20. 16; Rev. 22. 15.

4. Paul was no more heretical, criminally heretical, in belonging to the sect of the Nazarenes, than other Jews were in belonging to the sect of the Pharisees, or the sect of the Sadducees. Matt. 15. 1–9; 3. 7; 16. 1, 12–14; 23. 14, 15, 29; Luke 6. 6–8; 11. 47, 48; John 5. 8–10; 9. 16; Acts 23. 8.

5. Paul was willing to be regarded as heretical, or sectarian, when it meant doctrinal and ecclesiastical improvement, but when it stood for error in either or both of these particulars, he was opposed to it. 1 Cor. 1. 10; 3. 3; 5. 11; 11. 16, 19; Matt. 18. 7, 17; Rom. 16. 17; 2 Cor. 13. 11; Phil. 2. 3; 4. 2; 2 Thess. 3. 6, 14; Tit. 3. 10; 1 Tim. 6. 3, 5.

6. Note the splendid intelligence, boldness, freedom, and conscientiousness of Paul in religious worship, vers. 14–16. Mic. 4. 5; Zech. 10. 12; 2 Tim. 4. 2; 2 Cor. 3. 12; 7. 4; 12. 11; 1 Cor. 7. 22; Acts 20. 23; 26. 26; Eph. 6. 19, 20.

7. The extent to which our hero succeeded in his struggle for supreme personal conscientiousness, ver. 16. Acts 23. 1; Rom. 9. 1; 13. 5; 14. 22; 1 Cor. 2. 4, 13; 2 Cor. 1. 12; Heb. 9. 14; 13. 18.

8. The sufferings of Paul, though great and peculiar, were not in excess of the average allotment of such discipline to the race of which he was a mighty member. 1 Cor. 10. 13; Jas. 1. 2–4. 12; Dan. 3. 17; Job 14. 1; Acts 14. 22; Rom. 8. 22; Rev. 7. 14.

9. Paul's objectionable views on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, ver. 21. Acts 26. 8; 1 Cor. 15. 12, 20, 35–44; 1 Thess. 4. 16; 2 Tim. 2. 18; Heb. 6. 1, 2; 11. 35.

10. Paul's mighty presentation of Christ, not in reserved, honeyed, apologetic terms, but as righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, ver. 25. Deut. 6. 25, with Rom. 10. 5; Rom. 10. 4, 5; Acts 17. 31; Heb. 1. 8; 1 Cor. 9. 25; Gal. 5. 19–23; Eph. 5. 18; Tit. 1. 8; Rom. 2. 5, 12, 16; 8. 6; 13. 9; 14. 10; 1 Cor. 6. 9; 2 Cor. 5. 10; Heb. 9. 27; 10. 28, 29.

The lesson teaches:

1. Our address should always be courteous, and it should artfully compliment the merit of the one to whom we speak, ver. 10.

2. Time is required to develop any extended mischief, ver. 11.

3. A positive accusation of guilt is inconsequential if it be answered by a faultless and useful personal record, vers. 12, 13.

4. We should cheerfully and freely avow our religious convictions in any presence, at proper times, ver. 14.

5. Supreme personal conscientiousness is possible, but only by supreme and constant personal effort, ver. 16.

6. For the sake of others we may conform to a really valueless ceremonial, ver. 18.

7. Paul's honest and artful courtesy won the leniency of Felix, ver. 23.

8. Let us always be able, as well as willing, to represent Christ adequately when invited, ver. 24.

9. When we present Christ, let it not be timidly and partially, but in his trinity of doctrinal truth, ver. 25.

10. The only "convenient" time to accept Christ is the first time he is presented, ver. 25.

Lesson XI. March 15. Paul Before Agrippa. Acts 26. 1-18.

1. Chapter 25 clearly illustrates God's way of carrying out his purposes, both protective and retributive, by moving even unsanctified human choice to do his bidding. Isa. 10. 5–12; 31. 5; Gen. 45. 5-7; 50. 20; Exod. 15. 9–11; Psa. 91. 5; Prov. 20. 24; Acts 3. 17, 18; Phil. 1. 12.

2. The intelligent propriety of Paul's appeal to Cæsar; Roman justice, when he was assailed by an ecclesiastical mob, chap. 25. Dan. 2. 33; 7; Acts 18. 2; 19. 21; Luke 2. 1; 3. 1; Acts 23. 24; 25. 1; John 18. 31, 39; 19. 10; Acts 16. 37; Dan. 6. 18, 19; Acts 22. 25–28; 23; 25. 16; 26. 32.

3. Paul's long imprisonment at Cesarea by Romans, to please the Jews, prompts the reflection as to the class of persons whom the Jewish Scriptures allowed to be thus confined. Gen. 42. 16–19; 1 Kings 22. 27; 2 Chron. 16. 9, 10; Jer. 37. 21; 38. 6; Matt. 18. 30; Luke 23. 19; Rev. 2. 10.

4. Also, the kinds of prisons then in use. Gen. 39. 20; 41. 14; Jer. 38. 6; Zech. 9. 11; Acts 5. 18; 16. 24; Gen. 40. 22; Matt. 14. 10.

5. While in such horrible confinement, what additional punishments were often inflicted? Judges 16. 21; 1 Kings 22. 27; Psa. 79. 11; 102. 20; Jer. 38. 6; Ezek. 19. 9; Mark 6. 17; Acts 12. 6; 16. 24.

6. A bright spot in the appalling darkness of prison life in the ancient East. Gen. 39. 21; Psa. 106. 46; Prov. 16. 7; Dan. 1. 9; Matt. 11. 2, Acts 16. 33, 34; 24. 23; 25. 36; 27. 3; 28. 16, 30; 2 Tim. 1. 16.

7. Paul's artful method, the method of inspiration, to predispose a distinguished and powerful individual, or assemblage of individuals, to listen long and attentively to an argument, an appeal, or a reproof, verses 2, 3. Rev. 2. 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20; Acts 24. 10; Rom. 12. 20; Prov. 25. 21, 22; Col. 3. 11–13.

8. Paul was bold to reveal to King Agrippa, and to others who may have been present, the real reason why he was thus persecuted, doubtless that he might in so distinguished a presence again preach Christ, vers. 6, 7. Gen. 3. 15; 22. 18; 49. 10; Deut 18. 15; 2 Sam. 7. 12; Isa. 4. 2; 9. 6, 7; 11. 1, 5; Ezek. 21. 27; Zech. 13. 1, 7.

9. We have reason to think that only the barest outline of this sermon has come down to us. This may be a part, and a very natural part, of the last remainder. Psa. 69. 4; 118. 22; Isa. 8. 14; Matt. 21. 42; Luke 2. 1; John 7. 48; 15. 24, 25; Acts 3. 20–22; Rom. 9. 32; Gal. 3. 16; 4. 4.

10. No other conversion was ever so remarkable, phenomenal, overwhelming, but all genuine ones are equally satisfactory in revealing to the "new creature" whom they produce the personal atoning Cause. 1 Kings 18. 37; Prov. 1. 23; Dan. 12. 3; John 6. 44; Acts 3. 26; Rom. 1. 16; 15. 18; 1 Cor. 1. 18; 2 Tim. 2. 10; James 5. 19, 20; Heb. 7. 25.

The lesson teacher:

1. Opportunity, being always providentially presented, should be fully embraced, ver. 1.

2. It is wise, artful, in beginning an address to one, or more, to use a trifle of judicious flattery, vers. 2, 3.

3. One whom you publicly skillfully pronounce "expert" will listen long and well to your address, and henceforth be your disciple.

4. Constitutional, or organic, greatness, whether it be meritorious or otherwise, in human character, cannot remain long popularly unobserved, ver. 4.

5. Conscientious changes of religious conviction being possible, and, it may be, frequent, should always be tenderly revered by those whose convictions change not, ver. 6.

6. The honesty, if not the intelligence, of a conviction is clearly enough proved when a man joyfully suffers that he may indulge it, ver. 6.

7. Paul believed, and so do I, in the physiological possibility of the resumption of physical living by the power of God, after the singular providence of mortality, ver. 8.

8. A strong mind may be conscientiously set in a horrid purpose of persecution and murder, ver. 9.

9. I am surprised, not at the power and glory of this conversion, but that it is not being repeated thousands of times daily.

10. This was the same voice that had tried ineffectually to make missionaries of the original apostles. Acts 1. 8; ver. 15.

Lesson XII. March 22. Paul Vindicated. Acts 26. 19-32.

1. The only sufficient explanation, and contradistinction from the heathen nations, of the Jewish people, was their hope of the Messianic Deliverer whom Paul here preached. 1 Sam. 2. 10; Num. 24. 17; Psa. 2. 6, 8, 9; 45; 72. 8; Isa. 9. 7; 13. 9; 34. 2; Jer. 23. 5; 25. 31; Dan. 2. 44; 7. 14; 9. 24, 25; Micah 5. 2; Zech. 9. 9; 14. 9; Mal. 4. 1.

2. Paul having been thus miraculously called to the missionary field of the Gentile world, "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision;" he instantly and mightily went, vers. 19, 20. Rom. 1. 1, 7; 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2; 15. 1–3; 2 Cor. 1. 1; Gal. 1. 1–4, 12; Eph. 1. 1–3; 3; Phil. 1. 1, 10; Col. 1. 2–4; 1 Thess. 1. 1–5.

3. The Gentile world which Paul was called to evangelize, together with prophecies relating to its conversion, etc. Gen. 10. 5; Rom. 1. 21; 1 Cor. 12. 2; Eph. 2. 4, 17; 1 Thess. 4. 5; Isa. 11. 10; 42. 1; 49. 6; 62. 2; Jer. 16. 19; Hosea 2. 23; Joel 3. 9; Micah. 5. 8; Mal. 1. 11.

4. The subjects of Paul's preaching to the Gentiles were: turning from sin, turning to God, and turning out righteousness, ver. 20. Deut. 6. 25, with Rom. 10. 5; 1 Kings 8. 33, 38; Matt. 9. 13; Acts 2. 38; 3. 19; 8. 22; 11. 18; 17. 30; James 4. 9, 10; Rev. 2. 5, 16; 3. 3; Rom. 14. 17.

5. Paul's authority for saying that he was delivered from the murderous wrath of the Jews by an act of God, ver. 22. Acts 21. 30; Exod. 15. 9–11; 2 Sam. 17. 14, 15; Psa. 91. 3, 11; 33. 10; 46. 1, 2; Matt. 6. 33–34; 10. 30.

6. What had "the prophets and Moses" said should come? ver. 22. Luke 24. 27, 46; Num. 24. 17; Deut. 18. 15, 18; Isa. 9. 7; 52. 7; Jer. 23. 5; Nah. 1. 15; Micah 5. 2; Zech. 9. 9.

7. The Gospel of Christ as Paul presented it to the Jews was mainly objectionable to them on account of its atonement ("should suffer"), conversion ("rise from the dead"), and universality ("to the Gentiles"), ver. 23. Psa. 16. 10; 22. 6, 14, 15; 69. 7, 9, 20; Isa. 11. 10; 42. 1; 49. 7; 53. 2, 4–6, 12; 26. 19; Dan. 7. 14; 9. 26; Zech. 11. 12, 13.

8. One of the many blessed meanings to us of Christ's resurrection, ver. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23, 53; Eccles. 3. 21; 12. 7; Matt. 10. 28; 22. 30; Luke 20. 37; John 10. 28; 2 Tim. 1. 10.

9. As Christ began to live again after his death, so the lives we are now living in the physical are to resume in the resurrection, and both soul and body are thus to live forever. Job 19. 26; Psa. 49. 15; Isa. 26. 19; Dan. 12. 2; Matt. 22. 29–32; Mark 12. 24; John 11. 24; 1 Cor. 15; 15. 35–44; Rev. 20. 13.

10. Paul, being justified by faith, had more than the peace and joy of a king, or a brilliant assemblage associated with a king, and he had the courteous hardihood to say so in the presence of both, ver. 29. Rom. 6. 23; 8. 17, 18, 28; 1 Cor. 9. 25; 2 Cor. 4. 17; 5. 1; Phil. 1. 23; 2 Tim. 2. 12, 4. 8; Col. 1. 12; Heb. 11. 10.

The lesson teaches:

1. The primary purpose of this address was individual Christian persuasion; incidentally it was intended for self-defense, whether Agrippa's famous concession was ironical or candid, as the exegetes are unprepared to agree.

2. When a duty is clearly known it should at once be done, ver. 19.

3. Let preaching be upon the subjects of repentance, conversion, and growth by pure service, ver. 20.

4. An effort will always be made by Satan to put a stop to faithful preaching, ver. 21.

5. Having found the will of God, any man who is determined to do it, regardless of the personal sacrifice involved, may depend upon divine help, ver. 22.

6. That is not preaching, but speculating, which presents any other than the few biblical themes, ver. 22.

7. A suffering Christ to atone for sin, a risen Christ for spiritual recreation, and an impartial Christ for every sinner, are the preacher's inexhaustible stock of material for sermons, ver. 23.

8. A proud, obstinate, dishonest sinner cannot now understand a Gospel sermon, and could not then, ver. 24.

9. Paul, unembarrassed by this abrupt but complimentary intrusion, responded most courteously in self-defense, vers. 25, 26.

10. How could Agrippa, a Roman "king," be a believer in the Jewish prophets, ver. 27.

11. Better give up an impressive text than insist upon an incorrect rendering of it, vers. 28, 29.

12. Paul, with genuine Christian spirit, would gladly have shared with his persecutors the joys, but not the ills, of his experience, ver. 29.

Review Service for the First Quarter.

BY J. WALLIS COOK.

SUBJECT, PAUL, THE CONSECRATED WORKER FOR GOD.

Superintendent. Concerning whom have we been studying the past twelve weeks?

School. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.

Superintendent. What are the leading incidents in the life of the apostle Paul, up to the time when our lessons begin?

School. Paul was a Jew, born in Tarsus, educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and an ardent persecutor of the Christians. While on his way to Damascus, he was stricken down by a light from heaven, and not disobedient unto the heavenly vision he became a disciple of the Lord Jesus. Thus the vessel chosen to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles was consecrated to the service of the Crucified One. He made three missionary journeys, visiting Asia Minor, Greece, and Macedonia, and he was eminently successful in winning many souls for Jesus, and establishing many Churches.

Superintendent. What relation, then, did Paul bear to Christianity?

School. Christ originated Christianity; Paul organized it. Christ imparted to humanity spiritual life, and disclosed a hope of pardon and glorious immortality. Paul embodied in letters the truths which Christ left scattered in priceless gems, unwritten, save by his disciples, and gathered into Church organizations those individual souls to whom Christ had given spiritual life.

HYMN. HYMNAL 51. 10, 11.

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad his wonderful name;
The name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
His kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.

God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
And still he is nigh; his presence we have:
The great congregation his triumph shall sing,
Ascribing salvation to Jesus, our King.

Then let us adore, and give him his right,
All glory and power, all wisdom and might,
All honor and blessing, with angels above,
And thanks never ceasing for infinite love.

Superintendent. This first lesson tells us of a *communion Sabbath at Troas.* Will the boys repeat the Golden Text?

Boys. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."

Superintendent. Will the girls relate the miracle wrought by Paul at this service?

Girls. "And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him."

All. Thus Paul comforted the Church at Troas, by his cheering presence, by his Gospel sermon, by his great power with God. With minds made serious and hearts filled with thankfulness they celebrated the eucharistic feast, and at dawn of the next day the apostle departed.

Superintendent. In the second lesson we find Paul at Miletus. Will the boys tell for whom Paul sent.

Boys. The elders of the Church of Ephesus.

Superintendent. In Paul's touching address to the elders he states his *one theme of preaching.* This is given in the Golden Text, which the girls of the school will please repeat.

Girls. "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Superintendent. What Paul said to the elders of Ephesus on this occasion he said through them to the other presbyters, not only of that province, but of the whole Church; not only then, but ever since and through all ages, for which end it has been left on record.

All. Paul's spirit and words on this occasion should stimulate us to a more earnest service for the Master. Let us daily pray for this.

Superintendent. In the third lesson what *needful words of counsel* did Paul address to these elders at Miletus?

School. He exhorted them "to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Superintendent. What other exhortations did Paul give these shepherds of the Church?

School. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, to rely on the grace of God; to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Superintendent. Why were these words of counsel necessary.

School. They were to take heed, for men would endeavor to draw them away from Christ; they were to feed the Church, for it is the purchase of Christ; they were to rely on God's grace, for it would build them up, and they were to support the weak, for it is Christ's command.

Girls. May the Lord Jesus help us to remember these loving words of counsel.

Boys. Amen and Amen!

HYMN. HYMNAL 574. S. M.

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,—
O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master's will.

Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely,
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.

Superintendent. The fourth lesson, "Paul Going to Jerusalem," introduces us to the occasion in which the apostle shows the *spirit of self-sacrifice.* Please relate the incidents of Paul's journey?

School. Paul sailed from Miletus to Rhodes, from thence to Patara, from thence to Tyre, and from thence along the coast to Cesarea. In the words of Scripture, "As we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said: Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem."

Superintendent. What noble reply did Paul make to these entreaties of his friends?

School. Then Paul answered (in words as simple as they are sublime): "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

All. In the language of the Golden Text, his friends acquiesced in his decision, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Boys. What lessons may we learn in times of trying circumstances, with premonitions of danger?

Girls. Steadfastness to duty, unselfishness of purpose, and heroism in devotion.

Superintendent. Will you repeat the titles of the next two lessons?

School. "Paul at Jerusalem" and "Paul Assailed."

Superintendent. When the apostle reached Jerusalem, what did he immediately do?

School. He declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, and all the Church at Jerusalem united in glorifying God for the triumphs of the Gospel.

Superintendent. Paul began this his third missionary journey at Antioch. Will the boys relate why he did not return thither?

Boys. "And when the seven days (during which Paul was performing his vow) were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him.

Superintendent. This was really the *end of the third missionary journey*, because we learn from the following lesson that he was *charged falsely and arrested wickedly.* Will you tell the story of Paul's arrest?

School. "Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he was."

Superintendent. Observe how blind was the zeal, and how furious the rage, of the unbelieving Jews, against the apostle. Well might he say, as he does in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, eleventh chapter and twenty-third verse, "in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft."

HYMN. HYMNAL 643. 8, 7.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shall be:
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, and hoped, and known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own!

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Saviour, too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
Thou art not, like man, untrue;
And, while thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may shun me;
Show thy face, and all is bright.

Superintendent. Though many strange places were occupied as a pulpit by this pioneer preacher of the cross, none was so striking as this the stair-way in the temple. Standing chained to two mailed men, he commands the attention of the excited mob in the temple court by his *relation of the story of his conversion* which we find in the seventh lesson.

School. With great wisdom and tact Paul addresses the maddened crowd. He repeats, with most courteous address, the story of his marvelous conversion, how he had been changed from the persecutor to the preacher, and how he had received his great commission to tell to dying men the story of the crucified Redeemer.

Superintendent. In the eighth lesson we find the apostle brought before the great council, the Sanhedrin, to answer the charges made against him. Will the boys repeat the Golden Text of this lesson, which contains *assurance and comfort from the Lord Jesus?*

Boys. "And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul."

Superintendent. Will the girls give the reason of this divine personal visitation to Paul?

Girls. As once before at Corinth, and once after in ocean peril, Christ came in a vision for the cheer and stay of Paul's spirit, for the consecrated worker was questioning concerning the present, and depressed concerning the future. Not for his own Christian comfort, or peace in trusting, for his faith was adequate to his personal needs; but Christ came to Paul at this time, partly to acquaint him that his work in Jerusalem was finished, and that it was approved, and to assure him concerning the longed-for work at Rome, that he should finish his course with joy.

Superintendent. Were Paul's trials over?

School. No, for in the ninth lesson we find the apostle the victim of a *treacherous design to take his life.*

Superintendent. Will you tell something concerning this plot.

School. "And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul." The tribune Claudius Lysias, upon learning the vow of these fanatical zealots against the apostle's life, and fully aware that the sanctity of the temple nor the strength of the citadel would afford protection to the man of God, the same night sent his prisoner under a strong protecting guard to Felix at Cesarea.

HYMN. HYMNAL 614. C. M.

Father of love, our Guide and Friend,
O lead us gently on,
Until life's trial time shall end,
And heavenly peace be won.

We know not what the path may be
As yet by us untrod:
But we can trust our all to thee,
Our Father and our God.

Christ by no flowery pathway came;
And we, his followers here,
Must do thy will and praise thy name,
In hope, and love, and fear.

Superintendent. Will you repeat the topics of the next two lessons?

School. "Paul before Felix" and "Paul before Agrippa."

Superintendent. In the first of these lessons we see Paul, the devoted preacher, not merely refuting the false charges which have been brought against him, but *improving the opportunity to preach Jesus*, and directs attention to his life, which furnishes the evidence of the truth of his faith. In the other lesson he sets before King Agrippa the *operations of divine grace* and the twofold mission which had been given him to do.

School. Paul, in the presence of Felix, was as the inferior before his superior, as the prisoner before the free man, as the accused one before his judge; but in the light of divine things it is the governor who stands accused before his judge, as one bound by the cords of sin before the freed man of the Gospel, as the inferior alarmed before the hero of God.

Boys. And as Paul embraced the opportunity to preach Jesus.

Girls. So Felix lost the opportunity to embrace Jesus.

Superintendent. What defense did Paul make before King Agrippa.

School. The address of Paul before the king is one of the longest which Luke has recorded. It is a defense of himself against unjust accusations, yet he does not seek to demonstrate his personal innocence, but to vindicate his mission and labors as an apostle. It is the last public testimony which the apostle delivered on the soil of Palestine.

Superintendent. In the next and last lesson of the quarter, we are told of the effects of these wonderful words of the apostle. Will you tell something concerning Paul's royal listeners?

School. The simple earnest words of the follower of Jesus were delivered before the most distinguished assembly, in a secular point of view, in the presence of which he had ever appeared; but they had no appreciable effect upon the hearts or minds of his noble hearers—each and all. The governor Festus and King Agrippa *neglected the golden opportunity*, for the one replies with a jest, and the other with words of derision and scorn. Paul's holy zeal is met by Agrippa's mockery; Paul's joyful assurance of faith by Agrippa's lamentable want of decision, and Paul's overflowing love by Agrippa's affected indifference.

Superintendent. What was the judgment concerning Paul?

School. He was declared innocent of offense.

All. In the summing up of the quarter's lessons we find the thought of consecration connecting them, like a series of pearls strung on a golden thread. "Two things lie in the conversion of Paul, and in every conversion: the man gets an Almighty Saviour, and God gets a willing servant." Paul was a chosen vessel, and all through his Christian life he was permitting God to use him in answer to his earnest request made at the time of his conversion. The name of Christ is the precious thing wherewith the vessel is charged. "We are so many vessels labeled on the outside with the name of Christ. Some are looking on who do not believe that the Spirit which fills us is the Spirit of Christ. Before them bear the name of Christ, when needful, on your lips, the Spirit of Christ in your heart, the example of Christ in your conduct."

HYMN. HYMNAL 726. 8, 7.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above.

NOTE.—As each lesson-topic is mentioned in the above review service, have it written upon the blackboard and the initials will spell CONSECRATION, which is the central thought of the quarter, and a good topic for an address.

Or, have the letters (cut from card-board) suspended from a wire at the rear of the Superintendent's desk, each letter being brought forward and placed in position when the particular lesson is mentioned.

Copies of this Review may be obtained of Phillips & Hunt, 805 Broadway, New York, at the rate of Fifty Cents per hundred, by mail.

Book Notices.

Hand-Book of Bible Biography. By Rev. C. R. Barnes. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. The library of Hand-books, published by the Book Concern, is growing, and now comprises three useful text-books, of which two, those on "Bible Manners and Customs," and "Bible Geography," are already recognized as standard authorities. This new work will at once step to the same position; for it represents the latest scholarship and the most careful investigation. Its author is a thorough student of the Bible, and abundantly qualified by knowledge, aptness, and training for his task, which has been a labor of love for years. The arrangement is convenient. The names of persons mentioned in the Bible are treated separately, even the most obscure receiving attention; and the lines of the more important personages, like Moses, David, Abraham, Paul, etc., are fully written. There is an advantage in having separate works on the geography and biography of the Bible, each in a single volume, over a cumbersome Cyclopedia in several large volumes, as every teacher of experience will perceive. The department of Bible biography has never before in a single work been treated with the thoroughness and completeness shown by this manual, which should have a place on the desk of every working Sunday-school teacher and Bible student.

The Year-Book of Sermons and Golden Texts for 1885. By the Rev. J. E. Kittredge, D.D. New York: Ward & Drummond, publishers. Our excellent friend, Dr. Kittredge, has done a valuable service in the preparation of this little manual, with its blanks for record of sermons, its daily Bible readings, its certificates, calendars, memory selections, and sundry memoranda. It is an ingenious and useful device.

A Valuable Library. We have received from Messrs. Dodd, Mead, & Co., seven superb volumes, by Rev. Alfred J. Church, M.A. The following are the titles: *Stories from Homer; Stories from Herodotus; Stories of the Persian Wars; Stories from the Greek Tragedians; Stories from Livy; Stories from Virgil; Roman Life in the Days of Cicero.* These volumes are brilliantly illustrated. The type is large, and altogether they form an English student's library of ancient classics attractive and instructive.

Music and Morals. By the Rev. H. R. Haweis, M.A. New York: Harper & Brothers, publishers. Somewhere among the seal courses of the C. L. S. C. this book should find an early place. It is a compact manual of the philosophy, biography, and instrumentology (is there not such a word?) of music. It gives a careful analysis of the psychological effects of music, traces the gradual development of vocal and instrumental music, and devotes nearly two hundred pages to charming biographical studies of the great masters. It discusses the origin and construction and great masters of the violin, the piano-forte, bells, and carillons, devoting seventy pages to English music, in its variety of forms as presented in the opera, the minstrels, vocal associations, orchestral societies, brass bands, string bands, ballad singers, etc., etc. This noble contribution to the literature of music is made by an artist and enthusiast who is as lofty in his ideals as he is merciless in his criticism upon puerility, pretense, and clap-trap.

A Pocket Geography on the Berean Lessons for 1885. Also A Pocket Note-Book and Calendar for 1885. We are sorry our attention was not called to this useful little book in time for notice in our January JOURNAL. We understand, however, that copies can still be had on application to Phillips & Hunt, New York. Any Sunday-school superintendent who will send his address will have one sent to him free of expense.

The Methodist Year-Book for 1885. Edited by W. H. De Puy, D.D., LL.D. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. As Methodism grows, so its "Almanac" gives place to a "Year-Book," and grows likewise. This stout pamphlet of 180 pages is packed to the covers with needed information, of just that sort for which many a man has ransacked his library by the hour in vain; but which he could find here in a minute, by glancing through this carefully digested table of contents. We regret that our notice of this manual, which ought to have been in the hands of every Methodist, and especially every Sunday-school worker, by the New Year, will not reach our readers until March; but its facts and figures (all for twenty-five cents) will be handy all through the year.

Sex in Mind and in Education. By Henry Maudsley, M.D. Syracuse, N. Y.: C. W. Bardeen. This tract is No. 9 of the "School-Room Classics," a series of most valuable articles on teaching by eminent writers from Milton to the Baroness Von Buelow, published in cheap and convenient form. Sunday-school as well as secular teachers will find the entire series well worth reading.

Songs of Praise and Prayer. Compiled and Edited by Charles H. Richards, D. D. New York: Taintor Brothers, Merrill, & Co. A compilation of good standard hymns, and a few new pieces, planned to bring into accord the singing of the congregation, the prayer-meeting, and the Sunday-school. It is an excellent selection, and is printed and bound handsomely.

Coleridge. By H. D. Traill. New York: Harper & Brothers. Another volume in the series of "English Men of Letters," a short road to literary knowledge, giving sketches of the great men of genius, reviews, and concentrated extracts of their works. To many the taste will whet the appetite for more thorough acquaintance with the subject, and even the most superficial reader will receive some benefit. This book will give all that the majority of reading people will need to know about Coleridge and his philosophy. It is clear in style, and among the best of its valuable series.

Elements of Morals. By Paul Janet. Translated by Mrs. C. R. Corson. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co. This work is designed as a text-book for schools. It recognizes the dependence of morality on religion. Its arrangement is clear and natural. It is a good book for the library as well as for the class-room.

The Mentor. A little book for the guidance of such men and boys as would appear to advantage in society of persons of the better sort. By Alfred Ayles. New York: Funk & Wagnalls. This is a manual on polite behavior, telling what to do, and what not to do. Many of the suggestions are admirable. We should, however, in regard to drinking and card-playing, say, "Don't."

Knocking. The words of Jesus at the door of the heart. A Sacred Monody. By J. R. Macduff, D.D. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." This beautiful little volume seeks to illustrate and enforce these words of Christ by other Scripture passages and by verses. These are arranged in morning and evening lessons for an entire month.

The Mistletoe Bough. By M. E. Braddon. New York: Harper & Brothers. A series of seven short stories bound in one volume. The low moral tone pervading the first story which we have read condemns all the rest which we have not read. We cannot recommend the writings of this author as fit for young people.

Memoirs of a Man of the World. By Edmund Yates. New York: Harper & Brothers. Not a novel, but an autobiography of a well-known author and lecturer, whose reminiscences of men and events are very entertaining. After reading it, we conclude that we do not care to be "a man of the world." There is a better way.

Silver Chimes; or, Olive. By Emma Marshall. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Five girls in one house make matters lively, and their story threads together an interesting series of incidents. We recommend this book for the Sunday-school library, to be read by "the older young girls."

The Children's Summer. By Mattie B. Banks. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. The story of a "Vacation Club of Brotherly Lovers," composed of little girls, and the curious experiences of its members, told in a charming style. Just the book for a birthday present to a little girl ten years old.

A Young Girl's Wooing. By Edward P. Roe. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co. This story is like most of its predecessors from the same pen, in its vigorous rather than artistic sketching of character, in its interesting but narrow range of incidents, and in the prominence which it gives to the element of love. But it contains less religion than most of Mr. Roe's stories, and in our judgment smacks altogether too strongly of the flirtations, hops, and frivolity of the summer hotel, to have a place in any Sunday-school library.

Old Umbrellas; or, Clarrie and her Mother. By Agnes Giberne. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. A good story, though beginning with poverty, hunger, and want of all things, but ending, as a good story should, with friends and prosperity, and hearts satisfied with the best of all treasures.

The Art of Life, and The Life of Art. By Alexander F. Oakey. New York: Harper & Brothers. Art, which was once for the few, is now for the many, as is evidenced by the publication of these essays on the principles of art, in the popular and cheap form of the Franklin Square Library. The work is written in a clear and pleasing style, and contains many illustrations. Its hints and pictures showing how to decorate the home would of themselves be sufficient to make it valuable.

The Lord Mayor. A Tale of London in 1384. By Emily Sarah Holt. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. It will do the young people of this century good to know through what storms of persecution and sore trial the faithful Christians passed, even before the Reformation. We have here an interesting narrative of the sufferings to which the Lollards were subjected in their early efforts to reform the abuses of the Church of Rome.

Some Literary Recollections. By James Payn. New York: Harper & Brothers. These "Recollections" give an interesting inside view of an author's life and experience, and also afford illustrations of some of the trials to which an editor is subject. Young writers might learn something from a perusal of the book.

Opening and Closing Services for First Quarter of 1885.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. Silence.

II. The Doxology. "Praise God, from whom," etc. [Tune, Duke Street.]

III. Responsive Sentences. [Psa. 121.]

Supt. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,

School. From whence cometh my help.

Supt. My help cometh from the Lord,

School. Which made heaven and earth.

Supt. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved.

School. He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Supt. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

School. The Lord is thy keeper:

Supt. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

School. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Supt. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:

School. He shall preserve thy soul.

Supt. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in

School. From this time forth, and even for evermore.

IV. Singing.

V. Prayer.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of the Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. The Supplemental Lesson.*

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

School. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

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* Special Lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.

CLASS RECORD FOR MARCH, 1885.

	March 1.	March 8.	March 15.	March 22.	March 29.
Weather.....					
Teacher.					
PUPILS.					

Whisper Songs for March.

NINTH LESSON.

WHERE can helpless little children
Hide from fear of harm?
Jesus calls them to his bosom,
Shelters with his arm.

TENTH LESSON.

There's no place so safe for children
As at Jesus' side;
If we follow in his footsteps,
He will be our guide.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

Let us see thy cross, O Jesus,
Let us hear thee call:
Out of highest heaven upon us
Let thy sunlight fall.

TWELFTH LESSON.

All our help we find in Jesus,
He is Lord and King;
When all other friends forsake us
To his hand we cling.

LESSONS FOR 1885.

First Quarter.

Jan. 4. PAUL AT TROAS.....Acts 20. 2-16.
11. PAUL AT MILETUS.....Acts 20. 17-27.
18. PAUL'S FAREWELL.....Acts 20. 28-38.
25. PAUL GOING TO JERUSALEM....Acts 21. 1-14.
Feb. 1. PAUL AT JERUSALEM.....Acts 21. 15-26.
8. PAUL ASSAULTED.....Acts 21. 27-40.
15. PAUL'S DEFENSE.....Acts 22. 1-21.
22. PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL....Acts 23. 1-11.
Mar. 1. **Paul Sent to Felix**.....Acts 23. 12-24.
8. **Paul Before Felix**.....Acts 24. 10-27.
15. **Paul Before Agrippa**.....Acts 26. 1-18.
22. **Paul Vindicated**.....Acts 26. 19-32.
29. **First Quarterly Review.**

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